The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE POPE'S PRAYER FOR PEACE

WHAT will the world think about the appeal and the warning addressed to it by the Pope on the Monday of the fourth week in Lent? The appeal was to the Christian peoples of the world. The warning was directed to their rulers and statesmen. A more important question still is, what will the world and its rulers do in regard to both the appeal and the warning? With the world apparently drawing closer and closer daily to the frightful catastrophe of war, the Holy Father's appeal to his followers was that if they have at all times need of the Christian virtue of hope, it is especially necessary that they have recourse to it with greater intensity in these calamitous times. They must "believe for certain that they and their affairs are governed by the will of God. All the anxieties of men's souls, therefore, rest in this virtue, and let it be transformed into an ardent prayer to the Father of Infinite Mercy that better days may at last dawn for mankind. . . . Let them repeat the prayer of the first Apostles to Christ, 'Lord, save us, for we perish.'"

The warning was equally simple. Like the appeal it was based upon the first principles of Christianity: faith and hope in God—and also fear of His justice and His wrath. Said the Pope: "That the peoples of the world are again to take up arms one against the other; that the blood of brothers is again to be shed; that destruction and ruin are again to be sown on the earth and in the sea and in the air—all this would be a crime so enormous, a manifestation of savagery so insane, that we cannot, in fact, believe that those who must have the prosperity and well-being of their peoples at heart can wish to plunge them into slaughter, ruin and extermination, not only for their own nation but for a great part of humanity as well. But if someone dared to commit this nefarious crime—which

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God avert and which we ourselves believe impossible—then we could but address to God with saddened hearts the prayer: 'Confound the peoples who seek war.' "

The Associated Press reported that the English version of the Latin phrase used by the Pope was "that God would destroy" the makers of war. Other newspaper accounts varied; one saying that the word was that God might "disperse"; another that He might "scatter" or "disperse" the nation or people guilty of bringing the curse of war upon the world. But the Holy Father, unlike some rulers of this world, does not seek to usurp the power of God, or to put himself in God's judgment seat; and it may be accepted as certain that the Holy Father's words did not presume to specify the form that God's justice should take in punishing those who might bring the plague of war upon humanity—but that he simply would pray to God, and lead the Church committed to his charge in the same prayer: that God's justice shall be done as He wills in case the monstrous crime of unjust war should be committed once again.

In speaking of the multitude of requests for guidance and consolation that have poured in upon him since the war clouds began to gather so darkly, the Pope used language of the utmost possible gravity, repeating the words of Christ as they are recorded in Saint Luke's Gospel concerning the signs which have been construed as prophecies of the end of the world: "wars and rumors of wars," "the rising of nation against nation," and "men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world."

Nevertheless, it is hope and not fear; faith and not despair; strong confidence in the goodness and mercy of God and not pessimism or doubt which directed and controlled the Holy Father's message to his fellow creatures and his warning to their rulers. And that none shall question his belief in the power of the prayer for peace, and his absolute reliance upon its efficacy, the Pope announced that the Catholic Christian appeal to God for peace would be concentrated in three days and nights of uninterrupted offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Shrine of the Mother of Christ, Our Lady of Peace at Lourdes, beginning the Sunday after Easter. The whole Catholic world will be organized to join in this ending of the extraordinary Holy Year decreed by the Pope in celebration of the nineteen hundredth anniversary of the birth, death and Resurrection of mankind's Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Face to face with the present breakdown of civilized society, recognizing the woeful failure of secular leaders of mankind, up to this time, to solve the terrible problems which ever since the World War have bewildered and divided and appalled the greater part of humanity, Christ's Vicar on Earth now leads his own faithful flock—and all believers in God who are willing to join them and him—in a world-wide Crusade of Peace through Prayer.

It is not a crusade hastily improvised or adopted as a last desperate expedient. It is simply the organization and concentration of all the spiritual agencies of the Catholic Church which without ceasing are employed for the same purpose, namely, the securing of peace upon earth. Even in times of war itself the Church does not lay down her own true weapons: her prayers for peace, and her warning of what God's justice will inevitably visit upon those who unjustly resort to war. For in the Mass appointed to be offered in time of war, the Church prays: "O God, who bringest wars to naught and shieldest by Thy power all who hope in Thee, overthrowing those that assail them; help Thy servants who implore Thy mercy; so that the fierce might of their enemies may be brought low and we may never cease to praise and thank Thee."

Again, in the same Mass for Peace—which today is being offered at 100,000 altars throughout the world, and the power of which will be marvelously emphasized in the extraordinary effort to be made at Lourdes—there is that great prayer in which, so it would seem, all men and women of good-will and of faith in God may join, no matter what particular form of faith they may follow: "O God, from Whom proceeds all holy desires, right counsels and just works; give to Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be disposed to obey Thy commandments, and the fear of enemies being removed, our times by Thy protection may be peaceful."

Surely, as we believe, the serene, powerful hope of the Holy Father will be justified. The statesmen, and still less the politicians and the secular leaders of this world all together, are manifestly incapable of solving the problems of the world—in particular, the supreme problem of war or peace—unless or until the power of prayer shall aid them. That power has now been summoned, and it well may be that what will be chanted at Eastertide this year throughout the war-threatened world will be supremely justified, namely: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Give praise unto the Lord, for He is God; for His mercy endureth forever." At least so one may hope; realizing that another outbreak of ruthlessness, with barbarism in its wake, would destroy the civilization which has been one splendid by-product of Christianity, and might conceivably doom that Christianity itself to centuries of hiding in new catacombs and of witnessing through death and suffering before the mob.

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Week by Week

FROM almost every point of view, the week was oppressively disappointing. There was no increase of clarity at Washington, hesitancy to commit the government to further experiment being dictated to a considerable extent by lack of agreement concerning a number of experiments already attempted. The international trade advantages gained through recourse to devaluation were threatened as Belgium also allowed its currency to drift subject to the control exercised by a stabilization fund. No one would predict that Switzerland's referendum on devaluation of the franc would favor the conservatives; and the feeling was practically unanimous that France must follow suit. Some pointed out that speedy capitulation by the gold bloc would probably expedite world-wide monetary stabilization. On the other hand it is pretty obvious that, in so far as the United States is concerned, the result of stabilization now would probably be almost irresistible pressure on the existing debt structure. Wholesale readjustment of the nation's obligations is, as a matter of fact, being prepared for by advocates of new bankruptcy legislation. The best observers do not question the imperative need for such readjustment. Their worry is rather about the possible effect on unemployment. It seems to them that the net result of clamor for the "control" of private capital has been a decrease in the number of men employed by that capital; and their feeling is that this decrease may be still more marked. No less precarious, of course, is the public debt situation—the mounting obligations of the federal government, the states and the municipalities. Any blow to the borrowing power of these must of necessity be reflected in relief and public employment expenditures. Accordingly it is rather easy to feel that some kind of major show-down is rapidly approaching, the outcome of which is as important as it is unpredictable.

The Trend of Events

PERHAPS the net result of recent European conferences is more business for the armament purveyors. It is genuinely ironical that in Germany the manufacture of war materials, forbidden by the peace treaties, should be that upon which the present government relies to keep up the pace of current domestic industrial activity. By putting to use native resources in metals, by reconditioning abandoned barracks and training fields, by constructing military roads and fortifications, and by employing a large number of skilled workers on military projects, the men close to Hitler doubtless hope to have something to show for a steady increase in public indebtedness. The precariousness of such a policy is of course obvious. A declaration of war would not relieve the situation in any way, entirely apart from the question whether Germany could be victorious in such a conflict. The sole chance would come if German diplomacy succeeded in using the newly won military strength of the country in such a way that concessions of value could be obtained without recourse to arms. If, for example, Hitler could persuade both Italy and France that it was better to accede to the incorporation of Austria into the Third Reich than to risk a war, then naturally the Nazi system would have gained the sort of victory it needs. There is no immediate prospect of such an event. British sentiment was doubtless prevailingly sympathetic to the idea of making concessions to Germany; but the net result of the Simon-Eden visit was to show that Hitler has no other argument than a thump on the table. And this thump is something to which virtually every other European nation can say ditto.

The Situation Abroad

MEDICINE is a point at which hard times come to a focus. Doctors can't afford to practise for pleasure; the sick must be relieved though there is nothing but a hole in the family pocket. So far the record of the depression is fairly heroic: thousands of physicians have done without fees they might have expected in normal times, and countless patients have taken what they could get resignedly. But all this cannot continue forever. It is said that the doctors of some cities have voted resolutions advocating payment of municipal salaries of $200 a month, in return for which professional service is to be given free to members of the community. More immediately impressive is the system of group hospital insurance now in effect in several places. For a premium of just a few cents a day, members of worker groups can assure themselves three weeks of free hospitalization in time of need. Such forms of private or semi-private health insurance are bound to become more popular. Whether they ought to be supplanted by a generally enforced system of compulsory health insurance is a different question, of course. The administration of such systems has bred a score of major evils wherever tried; and it is safe to say that doctors in countries where insurance of this kind exists would drop it like a hot poker could they think of anything to put in its place. Of course the trouble is that they cannot. If present conditions last, the tax for possible medical emergencies is as sure as the coming of Easter.

Medical Socialization

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After Seventy Years

READERS familiar with the files of the *Catholic World* need not be told that they are rich sources of information concerning the tradition, literature and activity of the Church in the United States. Father Hecker, Father Hewitt, Father Burke, Father Gillis—the succession of names has a luster which only the editorial rosters of the greatest magazines of the country can rival. But what needs particular emphasis on the seventieth anniversary is the service which the magazine has rendered to virtually all Catholic writers. The names of Miss Guiney and Miss Repplier are, for example, inseparable from the history of the *Catholic World*. Chesterton and Belloc made their first American entrances here; and though the stage was small and the management often hard pressed, there was never any doubt that the audience was listening to a quality performance, as good as anybody could make it. There is nothing to which the editors of THE COMMONWEAL can look back more gratefully than to their associations with their Paulist contemporary. Some of them received, in the callow days of their youth, both a warm reception and a measure of discriminating criticism which they have not forgotten. It remains therefore to add, in these days of peril to all honest literary and artistic activity, a prayer that the *Catholic World* may speed toward the century mark with all banners flying, secure in the esteem of the thoughtful and liberally provided also with enthusiastic readers.

A Warning Repeated

WE HAVE spoken before this of our conviction that a certain type of publicity purporting to be "news" or "human interest" is actually more debasing and more productive of corruption than much that is deliberately immoral in purpose. There are details surrounding crimes—crimes of violence, and especially crimes of abnormality—for which the only proper place is a case-history in pathology, kept in a locked file available only to serious students. Almost all newspapers are guilty of overstepping this line at times. Certain of them make their living largely by doing so. New Yorkers have just been treated to an especially nauseous example. What purports to be the personal story of a degenerate maniac, under present sentence of execution for his crimes, was advertised in one of the city's tabloids; and the account has just been crowned by the printing of a paragraph of his alleged further confessions, which are first described (rightly, from the sample) as "unprintable." A lapse like this is not only an indecent abuse of newspaper privilege; it not only contributes to degrade public taste. It is specifically dangerous. It promotes the excitation of all the morbid or deformed imaginations within the radius of its suggestion. It is not easy to understand why a statute cannot be framed forbidding this purveying of the pathological.

The Use of Dividends

THE MARCH *Consumers Defender* has an article by Meyer Parodneck on "Consumers' Cooperatives in Europe," which states: "In Russia the cooperatives have abolished the individual 'patronage dividend' altogether, and apply all surplus earnings to common uses, such as construction of libraries, schools, vacation resorts, etc." We heartily approve of consumers' cooperatives and recognize that they are a most useful and honorable aspect of Russian economy (and of other national economies, where they flourish), but we feel that the sentence quoted calls attention specifically and objectively to a mistake general to the present Communist régime which in the future will increasingly impede the advance of the Soviet Union. So far, Russia has been working to effect not only the Marxist revolution but also the industrial revolution. There have existed such obvious physical needs that people almost automatically agreed on the "common uses" of the products of their toil, and using these products in common enormously speeded the exciting industrial revolution. The productive plant has not yet furnished much "dividend," or surplus product above a generally agreed upon living minimum. The technical dividend from the cooperatives could be assigned to these common uses without many people wishing it had been diverted to some other purposes.

THE RUSSIAN totalitarian state has not given evidence that it recognizes the problem of investing the surplus production of the population is properly a casuistical problem based on something other than the gross material strength of the state as judged by the Communist party officers. Such a criterion would mean that the individual existed for the state, and the most generous possible definition of the state in the context would be the majority. Of course, a large part of the surplus production should go for common uses which the majority agree are fitting, but it will be hard to convince an outsider that the transition from an uncomfortable statism to a happy anarchy has commenced until some "dividend" is at the disposal of minority groups to do with as they please, within the wide bounds of civilization; and until some is left to families and, indeed, to individuals. We will not, as a matter of fact, feel altogether at ease until somehow it is arranged that mystical obscurantists can devote part of the value they create to support and develop their ancient cults.

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THE LAY FACULTY

By WARD STAMES

The situation of the Catholic lay professor is after all something associated intimately with Catholic Action. We are presenting this week a purely negative criticism, by a man who writes with obvious bitterness. Mr. Stames will be answered, in our next issue, by a teacher who reaches almost the opposite conclusion. If the reader will put the two papers together he will get, we believe, a fairly adequate commentary on a difficult and important educational problem.—The Editors.

AN INCREASING murmur has of late arisen in the circles of Catholic education, and its substance seems to be this: Why do not more young Catholic laymen who have received their advanced degrees accept positions in Catholic colleges? Hovering around this major complaint is a puzzled corollary: And why is it so generally true that these colleges cannot hold them for more than one year?

Andrew Corry in a paper titled "Living Endowment" (COMMONWEAL, October 19, 1934) partly answered the query. It was his thesis that the intolerable financial sacrifice imposed upon lay professors by the necessity of counteracting insufficient endowment with a reduction in cash salary kept the younger men without private incomes from accepting positions which were agonies of protracted impoverishment. This is indeed half the reason. But it is not all, since in these lean days most fledgling doctors of philosophy—orphans of the crash—would be glad to accept the reduced scale of pay. There are deeper, more subtle shadows upon the question.

It becomes at this point necessary to set up a screen of defense for these opinions, and it cannot be better erected than by quoting some lines on Chaucer from John Dryden's introduction to his "Fables, Ancient and Modern." Therein he says: "The scandal that is given by particular priests reflects not on the sacred function. A satirical poet is the check of the layman on bad priests. When a clergyman is whipped, his gown is first taken off, by which the dignity of his office is secured."

The gown must therefore be now taken off, and this procedure (delicate certainly for lay fingers) may be accomplished, however, with no disgrace or embarrassment by simply considering the priest as a teacher. In a seminary or in any institution devoted to the education of the religious it would be impossible to consider the priest apart from his sacred function. But since lay professors are never employed in seminaries, and since these remarks are directed toward the Catholic college which is established for the education of the laity, young boys (or girls) seeking a B. A. or B. S. to fit them for battle with the world, it is wholly possible for us to survey the priest as educator alone, not as priest-teacher. The North Central Association and its kindred give full secular rating to many small Catholic colleges just as they do to many Protestant colleges, without concerning themselves over the religious qualifications or creeds of the institutions' faculties.

This distinction, however, seems very unfortunately to be seldom realized by the priests themselves, who either from neglect or carelessness fail in their own minds to divorce their two duties from each other. The sacerdotal power ever lends authority to the educational. The priest, under a clear and impartial light, must be admitted to be a functionary of the Church, a minister to the people, and a teacher of the Gospel. It does not follow that he shall teach mathematics or sociology; these offices he has taken unto himself—there is not Scripture for it. Naturally the laity has rarely complained because priests teach school; there was a time when the priest was the only educated man in a community. And great teaching orders doing fine work have sprung up in every country; these have imposing and indestructible traditions of precedent behind them. But the fact that they do teach does not destroy the theoretical truth of the point. Ordination in the minds of some of them regrettably carries with it not only the ecclesiastical power but somehow bestows upon them an aura of wisdom quite equal to that imparted by a Ph.D.

It is not by any means the fault wholly of the priest. In the mind of the laity the imposition of the hands invests him with supernatural wisdom as well as his other power. This is undoubtedly, as suggested before, a medieval carry-over. Even the students in some respects help the illusion along by submitting to sacerdotal pronouncements made in a more or less *ex cathedra* tone of voice, whereas they would argue with a lay teacher. Whether or not this improves the general quality of Catholic education is not a question to be disputed here.

Having pointed out these things, then, it becomes necessary to return to the first question. Why do not the young lay professors desire to teach in Catholic colleges, or why do they not stay there after one year?

At the outset there is of course the very usual complaint that there is no opportunity for ad-

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vancement. This is wholly true, but there is more. Through knowledge of others' experiences, acquired at second-hand, or through their own personal contact with Catholic colleges, they have come to learn of the treatment which is accorded the lay professor in a religious institution where most of the faculty is composed of priests. They have either heard of, or discovered for themselves, the nature of that peculiar status in which the lay teacher finds himself. He exists as a professor without jurisdiction, a departmental head without authority, a tongueless mute. His position is precisely that of a more or less glorified janitor. Although he may as a student have had a brilliant reputation, a certain importance or respect at a state school a hundred times the size of his Catholic one, he finds himself to his dismay and puzzlement very gently pushed back on the shelf to a third or fourth row of importance, like a hay-fever remedy reached for only once a year. It is a humbling experience for him, and in that perhaps valuable, but there are few potential a Kempis's among the lot, though each if he were gifted would be qualified to write a new "De Imitatione Christi" when his prenticeship was ended.

The lay professor, moreover, is under no obligation to his priestly colleagues outside of the confessional, save the college president, but each of them from the dean of men to the registrar attempts indirectly to guide him or give him advice about the technique of his teaching. The college's own white-haired boys who graduate and go to a seminary for ordination and an S. T. B. come back still with their minor degrees and set themselves up as little Caesars over men whose education may be superior to theirs.

These things could well be tolerated, indeed, and one could sharpen his humility upon them, but there is more. The lay faculty is now and again accorded treatment which borders on insult. It may be permitted to me to become personal. I spent a year at a small college in the West where the things mentioned in the paragraph above were painfully in evidence. They could have been surmounted. But when announcements posted on the faculty bulletin board and consistently addressed to "Faculty Members" were discovered to be meant only for the priests and excluded without the suggestion of an explanation or apology the lay professors; when these men were not invited to faculty gatherings; when they were compelled on state occasions to leave their usual place in the refectory and sit like trained seals at a small table below their former seats which had been taken over by the priests, and this in full view of the student body; when they discovered they had no voice in running their own department even though they were head of it; when they were never consulted on a question of policy and were invariably omitted from the committees on studies and discipline; when they found their lives and ambitions crumbling under these and a hundred small humiliations, could they avoid saying rather cynically to themselves that they were mere hired hands? Yet loyalty was demanded of them, and the sacrifice of the living endowment; they were supposed to take an active interest in the college and in their classes, while they shuffled along the path to professional decay. The breaking of the spirit often ruins the future achievements of the intellect, and it is most often accomplished by the use of that small hammer: "What's the use of working where one's not appreciated?"

After all, the laity pays for every Catholic college. It supports as its servants the priests of the Church. It is the laity who is educated in these secular colleges. Theoretically, at least one-half the faculty should be lay instructors; failing in this, the representatives of the laity on the faculty should have some voice in guiding the educational experience of the students, who are then still lay people. At present the lay professor has only one value in the Catholic college, and that, strictly speaking, is not an exactly educational one. To him the students take problems now and again which are not for confession, and still not for the priestly ear. But this office, of course, might be filled equally well by any Betty Fairfax in the land.

No, in these respects Catholic education is yet far from perfect. It would be better to dispense entirely with laymen and return to the medieval standards than to keep crushing the lay professor. These remarks are not intended to be heretical; they do not criticize dogma. They are directed toward the Catholic public in a hope of stirring a renascence of interest. They are an earnest plea for the right of a situation which has somehow slipped into the wrong. They are for the good of the Church and her schools.

Mater Consolatrix

At last the Mother sees her Son. Her heart
Is yearning for a glance from His dear eyes
To help her bear this dreadful grief. She tries
To say His sacred name aloud. Her part
Should be to comfort *Him,* to soothe the smart
Which maddened throngs inflict with jeering cries
That mock her Son. But what if He denies
Her now to spare her needless pain! This dart
Is only one of many. She is brave;
She gently touches Him with eager grace
And Jesus turns to look—for He would save
His Mother sorrow in this public place;
But Mary counts this bitter shame no loss,
Will not her love be God's strength on the Cross?

MOTHER THOMAS AQUINAS.

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A GOOD-WILL TOUR

By T. LAWRASON RIGGS

I WAS delighted to accept the invitation of the National Conference of Jews and Christians to tour the South as the Catholic member of a "good-will team," "for Justice, Amity, and Understanding among Protestants, Catholics and Jews in America," starting on January 27 last. My pleasure came, however, largely from the prospect of three weeks' association with my good friends, Dr. Clinchy and Rabbi Lazaron, and, be it confessed, from the hope of a respite from the rigors of a Connecticut winter. As to the reception we were likely to meet, I was dubious. Were we not about to invade the stronghold of Protestant Fundamentalism, which was, not so long ago, also the stronghold of the Ku Klux Klan? Nor were my doubts removed by the remark of a young friend whose wife comes from Alabama. "I should like to call on Jane's family while in Blank," said I. "You certainly had better," he replied, "for you may need their protection to keep from being tarred and feathered." I was not sure that his joke was entirely without foundation.

At the University of North Carolina, our first stop, I had my first experience of our technique, evolved during the long tour last year on which Father Elliot Ross was the Catholic spokesman, of asking each other questions, not for the sake of debate, but for clearing up misunderstandings, on the alleged political aims of Catholicism, the clannishness of Jews, and so forth. Our student audience listened with rapt attention, and laughed satisfactorily at our jokes, while members of the faculty whom we met were friendliness itself. "Still," I reflected, "this is an enlightened academic community. Goodness knows what we will strike further South!" And rumors of continued activity of the Klan in Alabama were scarcely reassuring.

In the thriving city of Winston-Salem, after informally talking and listening to a group of clergymen of all faiths, we addressed a large meeting in the evening. It was our first full-length "performance," at which we could add our own thoughts on interfaith relations to the questions and answers. We were received with eager enthusiasm. "Can it be," I wondered, "that my host from Yale has persuaded prejudice to sheathe its claws?"

At the ancient and picturesque Moravian college for women at Salem, the girls closed our meeting by singing, "Faith of our fathers, living still, in spite of dungeon, fire and sword." I was thus enabled to point out to later audiences that Protestants had borrowed a Catholic hymn, composed with the English martyrs in mind, to commemorate the persecutions they had suffered.

In Jacksonville, after we had addressed four high schools in a single morning, a distinguished gathering listened to us at luncheon. At West Palm Beach the local committee, not content with organizing a successful meeting, provided us with a delightful afternoon of deep-sea fishing. Our stay in the beautiful surroundings of Rollins College at Winter Park was among the most interesting of our trip. Besides the larger meetings, we were welcomed into various classes where interesting discussions took place, and these were continued in gatherings at the house of President Hamilton Holt. We left with regret, and Alabama was before us.

When we arrived in Montgomery on the morning of February 8, we were met at the station, not by a white-robed cavalcade, but by an invitation to address the Legislature! There, standing on the platform beside the speaker's desk in the beautiful old capitol, a priest, a minister, and a rabbi, doubtless for the first time in American history, jointly addresed the Legislature and Senate of a state in the cause of good-will between the three great religious groups of America. The experience, as moving as it was unique, was followed by a cordial reception on the part of Governor Graves. If Rabbi Bernstein, who had just replaced the veteran Lazaron on our team, felt any nervousness at such a very official début, he did not show it.

After a day of meetings in Montgomery, we entrained for Tuscaloosa, and, my preconceptions as to the hostility of Alabamans being by this time completely shattered, I was scarcely surprised when the conductor told us that his wife had instructed him to be particularly solicitous for our welfare. Even then I was amazed, however, to learn that the number of Catholics at the University of Alabama is greater than at Yale.

At Birmingham all the city school-teachers, including a group of Sisters from the parochial schools, were assembled in a vast auditorium to hear us. At Chattanooga and at Roanoke, our last stop before returning to New York, our numerous and varied meetings were marked by an interest and friendliness which by this time no longer surprised us.

It is thus the cordiality of our reception which is my chief impression of the trip. Everywhere the Protestant majority, led by its clergy, had prepared our visit in active cooperation with

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Catholics and Jews. Several of our large luncheon meetings were broadcast, and we had more than one opportunity, at radio stations, for reaching large audiences over the air. The press was everywhere anxious to do their part and reported our meetings with sympathy and intelligence. But though we certainly did not create the spirit in which we were received, we felt we had helped to foster and fructify it. The mere fact of our joint appearance was visual evidence that clergymen of the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant faiths can, without the slightest compromise of their respective religious allegiances, amicably discuss misunderstandings, frankly state their differences, and explore the areas of possible cooperation in social and civic fields. Our audiences responded eagerly to the lessons we tried to emphasize, notably to our suggestions that local interfaith committees be made permanent. And they seemed to share with us the belief that we were accomplishing something toward that spreading and quickening of public opinion that organizations can direct and canalize, but without which their efforts must be largely futile.

Personally I value the contacts with Southern Protestantism as a most enlightening result of the trip. No fair-minded person could meet its representatives, clerical or lay, without realizing that the portrayal of such men as mere bigoted Fundamentalists is a gross caricature. No Catholic could fail to respond to the vital faith in supernatural Christianity, and to the eager charity, that marked so many of the cultivated gentlemen it was my privilege to meet. For these things, as for their genuine desire to understand where they are unable to agree, I thank God.

THE DECLINE OF RETICENCE

By ELMER MURPHY

THE REGENERATION of industry and the reconstruction of society have become, apparently, the great American preoccupation. Thousands of otherwise modest and self-effacing citizens have devised to throttle the depression and put the republic on the way of recovery and, at the same time, lay the foundations of a new order of existence. Departmental files in Washington are crammed with them and the accummulation is growing day by day.

These thousands, unnumbered and unnamed, are not alone in the belief that they have suddenly been endowed with the wisdom of the ages and the gift of prophecy which they, commendably enough, purpose to use for the benefit of mankind. There are others who, though not actuated by the same apostolic fervor, are complacently picking civilization apart, if they are less intent upon putting it together again. Grave economists turn their backs on the past to denounce the present. College fellows and professors, out of the knowledge of their two score years, nonchalantly point out the childish mistakes mankind has made in the course of twenty centuries and tell their contemporaries how the world should be made over. Beardless college youths foregather to discuss solemnly the catastrophic errors their forebears have committed and lay down principles for the guidance of nations. Not a few of their elders, in an excess of humility, pat them on the shoulder and tell them the future is in their hands.

The clash of conclusions is a little deafening. The only harmonious note in the chorus of prophecy is that whatever was is bad and that only in the new will salvation be found. We are told by some that religion is superstition, by others that capitalism is thievery, that the profit motive is greed, that investors are "plutocrats," that saving is a vice, that democracy is an illusion, that the gold standard is a fetish, that work too long continued is anti-social and that thrift is a crime against the State. How America escaped being bogged down in the mire of all these iniquities and, in spite of them, succeeded in raising the standard of living to a level hitherto unattained is explained only by the premise that we have suddenly been projected into a new and topsy-turvy world in which experience, like everything else that has been, goes for nothing and that in this setting virtue has become vicious and right has become wrong.

Mr. Townsend emerges out of the golden sunshine of California to set aside age-old ideals of thrift and cure the country's ills by a formula which involves no effort but the spending of a vast amount of non-existent money. Senator Huey Long proposes to nationalize and redistribute wealth—a program which smacks of large-scale robbery to the old-fashioned. Father Coughlin admonishes the President, Congress and the public at large with unhesitating facility and dogmatically diagrams a new world in which the beatitudes will give way to more heroic and aggressive virtues.

Ideologically, Washington of the thirties has taken on the color of the Paris of the Revolution, when the débris of the past was swept into the gutter and a new state, a new calendar, a new religion and a new way of doing things were set up overnight by decree. The corridors of the

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Capitol and the lobbies of the hotels are swarming with individuals carrying suspicious bundles of lop-eared documents who stalk the legislators and government officials with glassy-eyed perseverance, intent upon telling somebody what the American people should do to save themselves.

These innumerable plans might be good or bad, the fruit of long and seasoned deliberation or a clutter of nonsense. The world might be a frightfully old-fashioned place and civilization an agglomeration of blunders committed by ancestral incompetents who made it the sorry thing it is. But one cannot help, now and then, looking back longingly over one's shoulder—at the risk of being condemned as a conservative and enemy of the people—to the time when reticence was accounted an earmark of wisdom and humility was a badge of greatness. The admonition that "a man that hideth his foolishness is better than a man that hideth his wisdom" certainly made for greater comfort and peace of mind than the radio and the soap-box.

All that is lacking in these plans, it appears, is somebody to adopt them and, until they are adopted, somebody to listen while they are expounded. Reluctance to conform to them does not lead to the guillotine but it invites the penalty of submitting in silent patience to the discordant din. It is useless to question their soundness in the dim glimmer of past experience or the competency of their authors. The college undergraduate stands upon the same authoritative footing as the septuagenarian who has given a lifetime to the scrutiny of laws and of men. The theologian, guided by a creed sanctified by the solace it has afforded countless generations, lightly casts aside as outworn and antiquated other traditions much less deeply rooted in human practise and forthwith proceeds to draft a new charter for the conduct of industry and trade. The misgivings of statesmen who have grown old trying to fathom the frailties and vagaries of popular temperament are pooh-poohed by the young professor who would compress poor wavering human nature into the rigid mold of a theory of his own designing.

No, the only obstacle to the complete success of these projects for making life over seems to be the mental inertness of the people they are to benefit. The only way of overcoming this obstacle is by vociferation—and that's where the rub comes. It may be the unctuous purring of those who seem to think it a public service to tell the inarticulate millions what a wretched mess they are making of living, the broadcasting and speech-making of the "book boys," who come down from their academic Olympus to guide the footsteps of befuddled mortals, or the noisy asseverations of disillusioned youths and impatient moralists that we are stewing in the juice of our own misdeeds. In any case there is no way of escape. Protest only serves as a sounding-board to amplify the discord.

For the benighted—and that means most of us unfortunates who have no plans but are groping in the darkness of reality—there is no defense but to put our fingers in our ears. It would, obviously, not contribute to our own or to other's peace of mind to meet vociferation with more vociferation. We cannot gain the solace of silence by trying to shout them down. This is preeminently an age of expression, not of deliberation. The Freudians and psychoanalysts tell us that repose is to be obtained only by "getting things off our chests." The rule seems to apply to peoples as well as persons. Humanity is divided into two classes, the planners and the listeners, and the listeners are helpless. Perhaps the Freudians are right. It might be that after the universal orgy of planning and readjusting and reforming has been spent, we shall get down to the age-old practise of dealing with things as they are, less confident of our capacity to make them as they ought to be.

In plan-making no exequatur is given or demanded. No credentials are asked. If we build a house, we employ an architect. If we have a toothache, we call in the dentist. But if our civilization is to be dismembered, if our industry is to be recast in a new mold and our institutions are to be overhauled and adjusted to new conditions, anyone will do. Long experience in the saving of souls might be a doubtful qualification for saving the banking and monetary system. In this age of close economic relationships the manufacture of automobiles and the packing of pork might have an "ethical" or "social" aspect, but neither saintliness nor moral philosophy have yet served as a satisfactory substitute for factory management, any more than automobile manufacturing or pork packing have provided the basis for a moral code. Papal encyclicals bearing on the subject properly deal with the moral and religious aspects of social justice but they do not prescribe how railroads are to be run or currency is to be manipulated. Much less do they label capitalists as "plutocrats" or lay down rules for the expenditure of "other peoples' money."

Authority and precedent have gone the way of outworn shibboleths. Habit alone compels a formal deference to the Constitution, but that venerable, and now unvenerated, document has been so pulled and hauled to adjust it to our inclinations that we are beginning to regard it as a historic monument caught in the backwash of more vital currents of thought. For the same reason, the Supreme Court of the United States is, by some, also regarded as an obsolescent institution which should be modernized and bent to latter-day purposes by the injection of new and liberal blood—a sort of legalistic face-lifting

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operation to give it at least the appearance of youth. It never seems to occur to the plan-makers that they, too, are old and that history is sprinkled with the deeds of their predecessors which appear only as passing ripples on the broad flow of human affairs. Novelty alone is thick with the dust of antiquity.

The difficulty appears to be that the storm of depression has parted the anchor chains which moored us to the past and set us adrift upon the broad sea of speculation which starts—and probably will end—nowhere. Tradition has become the reprehensible perpetuation of superstition. Precedent has become a brake upon progress. Reverence, the acknowledgment of good deeds done, has become idol worship. Authority has become tyranny. All the bariers of custom, laboriously built up through the centuries, which stand between us and a strident present, have been leveled.

Consequently, force is its own justification. Those who shout the loudest and the longest will have their way. Those who promise most will easily outrun those who are deterred by the unfulfilment of similar promises made before them. Novelty stands on its own feet, not because it betokens improvement, but because it holds out the prospect of a change from the drabness of the immediate past shrouded in the grey shadows of depression. It dulls our sense of the difficult present by painting a bright picture of the future.

The New Deal, like every other doctrine or policy or institution with a few years behind it, has not escaped the obloquy of age against which the planners inveigh. It belongs to yesterday—a damaging shortcoming. There are now "newer deals" in the making and the apostleship of the President is under challenge. He reduced the gold content of the dollar. Others would abandon it altogether. He asked for $4,000,000,000 for work relief. Others would double or treble the sum. He proposed a pension for the aged. Others would give two or three times the amount. He suggested the regulation of recalcitrant business. Others would have the government take it over altogether. If truth were known, there is probably not a plan that would not stand condemned by the planners themselves because they have one which would go much further in the same direction.

Congress, too, has fallen under the spell. The late Uncle Joe Cannon once explained to the writer, somewhat sadly, that he intended to retire to the seclusion and peace of his famous back porch, because the House of Representatives, unlike the leopard, had changed its spots in response to the clamor of the plan-makers of that day. He was too old to adapt himself to the alien environment. Singularly enough, the order for which he stood now appears to be coming back. The New Dealers have found it necessary to resort to the "gag rule," once anathematized as "Cannonism," to hold the vociferous planners of the present day in check. Thus does history repeat itself and the new become old.

There are some signs that the pendulum is about to swing back from the outer limits of social and economic wool-gathering to the uninviting but inescapable realities through which we are now stumbling. Attention is beginning to shift from distant horizons to the inexorable here and now. The New Deal which, like all new things, had its origin in fancy, is being slowly shaped to the contour of old and hard facts. New Dealers themselves have mustered enough courage to label as "cock-eyed" a plan which would go far beyond one of their own conception conforming to the bothersome actualities with which they have to do.

Perhaps the old standards of social conduct will come into their own again and reticence will become a virtue. Perhaps we shall resume the old practise of giving the laurels to the knowers and the doers who dig down to the bedrock of human experience to lay the foundations of progress and put the quietus of custom upon the planners who deal only with nebulous visions. We might even set up again the standards of modesty, reverence and humility which softened the asperities of existence through the ages and instead of drawing patterns of a new world make the most of the one we happen to be in. It may sound Victorian to say, with the poetical exponent of that fogotten period:

> In me there dwells
> No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
> Of greatness to know well I am not great—

but it would make, if we meant it, for more peace of mind for the hewers of wood and drawers of water who have no plans to offer.

On My Deafness

Thy servant's ears are closed to the low sound
Of friendly little talk or quiet jest,
Of baby voices, cooing at my breast,
Or small birds murmuring night-songs near the ground.
Great organ-thunders stun me and confound
My senses, and Love's accent like the rest,
May reach me but in part. My ear is pressed
To the world's lips, whence broken words resound.
But, Father, blossom and sunset are Thy voice,
Through color and all beauty art Thou near.
Love's hand upon me, eyes that answer, each
Small friendly deed, make music I may hear.
My impotent ears are opened to Thy speech;
Speak, Lord, Thy servant heeds, bid her rejoice.

LOUISA CHEVES STONEY.

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MARX AMONG THE AZTECS

By DIXON WECTER

THE AVERAGE American north of the Rio Grande finds it hard to reach any clear, realistic idea of the present government in Mexico: official pronouncements, press dispatches and magazine articles are strikingly at variance. Is this régime really one of capitalism, or Socialism, or attempted Communism? And, among practical questions, why does it continue its savage assaults upon the Catholic Church? Is the motive one of diabolic sadism, as some religious people probably believe, or else is it pure patriotic zeal in crushing a spiritual tyranny wielded from Rome, as spokesmen of the government explain to Ambassador Daniels and other gullible tourists?

The last questions are more readily answered than the first. Behind the religious persecution two definite causes are seen: in the first place, the necessity for explaining the seizure of lands, buildings and all the ecclesiastical booty, whose possession or usufruct the leaders of this government—like Calles, Portes Gil, Riva Palacio and Canabal—now enjoy; and in the second place, the rationalizing of their break with the old order which revolutionists always try to make in order to gain public approval, indoctrinate the young, and forestall a counter-revolution by a little judicious blood-letting. The legend of cunning and greedy priestcraft, which the ignorant and the envious are always ready to believe, has been carefully fostered by such apologists for revolution as Aarón and Moisés Sáenz, Toledano, and Bassols. These interlocking motives are not unknown to history. While opportunists like Thomas Cromwell and the Duke of Suffolk were sacking monasteries under the benevolent eye of Henry VIII, polemists like Cranmer and Bale were busily justifying such acts in sermons, tracts and morality plays so simple that the humblest folk might share in the great discovery that, after all, the old religion had been a very bad thing.

The political philosophy behind these current policies in Mexico is cynical and extremely flexible. Its professed atheistic socialism serves well the purposes of a government openly hostile to the Church and secretly hostile to foreign capitalists. At the same time its actual military Fascism—the rule of the army, from which all of its strength and most of its leaders have been drawn—is perfectly adapted to the confiscation of property, the enforcement of personal privilege, and the stamping out of any opposition from that proletariat for whom the government so frequently avows its warm affection.

Some eight years ago many rumors were afloat regarding a perilous new radicalism south of the Rio Grande. In 1927, Secretary Kellogg sought to convince the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate that Communism was receiving official encouragement in Mexico; and in the same year, in response to popular demand, the Hearst newspapers produced a series of documents—later conclusively proved to be forgeries—showing that the Mexican government was paying Soviet propagandists to work among the Indian masses. But with the appointment of Ambassador Dwight Morrow the hue and cry against Mexico died away. Mr. Morrow's skill in settling the long feud over American petroleum rights, and his stanch personal faith in the Mexican people, were greatly reassuring to conservatives in the North. And during the past few years the affairs of Mexico have not fallen under much public scrutiny in the United States, largely because of our own urgent problems.

However, at present there is an unparalleled amount of American travel in Mexico. The favorable rate of exchange, the opening this winter of the new motor road to Mexico City, and the world congress of Rotary International to be held there in June, 1935, will doubtless increase this traffic. Visitors to Mexico who are able to read local newspapers and official bulletins, or who are privileged to talk with intelligent Mexicans in public life, are likely to feel surprise at the sharp turn to the Left which Mexico apparently has taken. They will find that the national government has confiscated some 18,000,000 acres from private *hacendados* and redistributed them to villages as so-called "communal lands," in revival of the old Aztec system, which is not unfair save that the private owners have received in exchange worthless agrarian bonds; that the state governments of Vera Cruz, Hidalgo and Michoacán have occasionally expropriated foreign-owned factories, paying the owners 4 percent of the declared value, and turned them over to the workers to operate for their own profit; that in December, 1934, some 915,000 acres in the state of Zacatecas belonging to the International Rubber Company of Delaware were suddenly seized by the government without compensation or redress; and that Calles and the official party have vigorously approved the new Amendment to Article III of the Constitution which asserts that the "ultimate aim of the revolution is to overthrow capitalism." The traveler through Mexico will often see the symbol of sickle-and-

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hammer above the door of rural schoolhouses, and even more significantly will learn that the now declared purpose of state education in Mexico is to teach the ideology of socialism and with it "emancipation" from all religious belief; teachers refusing to conform to this program face summary dismissal. The new régime intends expressly that the schoolmaster shall supplant the priest as the traditional sage and counselor of the village. Many visitors will be shocked at the very lax divorce laws recently passed by several states (that of Chihuahua, for example, grants immediate divorce upon mutual request); and at the pagan candor with which young schoolchildren are instructed in sex by the mating of bulls and cows, and even franker methods.

An observer who stops here, without deeper knowledge of the racial psychology and politics of Mexico, will probably decide that the present leaders of *Callismo* are, as Mr. T. R. Ybarra declared several years ago in the New York *Times,* "as Red as the autocrats of Soviet Russia." And in regard to the future, fresh evidence may be drawn from the recent government brochure "Plan Sexenal," describing the Six-Year Plan which began three months ago with the inauguration of President Lázaro Cárdenas. After the statement that collective bargaining will be rigidly enforced in Mexican industry, we are told: "Confronted by the class war inherent in the system of production under which we live, the party and government is obliged to contribute to the strengthening of syndical organizations among the working classes." In all these utterances there is a great division between bold Marxian theory and cautious practise; the fruit may be capitalism, but meanwhile the flowers of rhetoric bloom red. Thus we read that Mexico aims to be self-sufficient by encouraging great diversity of crops and industries, yet that mankind would be much better off were all nations organized into a world economic state, in which complementary production would take the place of competition.

In the sphere of education, where theory is less likely to disturb the *status quo,* the Six-Year Plan offers even greater blandishments to Demos. Education, based squarely upon "the socialist doctrines which the Mexican Revolution supports," is the function of the State alone, and never of private groups or sects, as a "false and excessive concept of individual liberty" might permit. Stress is laid upon agricultural and technical courses, rather than upon training for the so-called liberal professions to which the universities have always slavishly catered. "The traditional privileges of the professional classes should be dissolved, and members of these classes thrown into direct contact with the organized masses of workers, so that the exercise of their professions will meet the needs of the collective body." The educational program of the Soviets is not unlike that of Mexico: the aim of each is to provide a much-needed training in hygiene, simple literacy, and the manual arts, which will also be heavily saturated with propaganda against the old order in Church and State. The minority which achieved the revolution in both countries is trying to enlist the sympathies of the young and thus perpetuate itself. The new Amendment to Article III of the Mexican Constitution proposes that education shall set out definitely to replace the antiquated notion of private property by that of collectivism, planting meanwhile in the hearts of young Mexico "love for the exploited masses and repulsion for those who exploit them."

With due allowance for differences of history and geography, certain similarities may be seen between the Russia of 1917 and the Mexico of today—such as the great national illiteracy joined to a vague aspiration for better things, the colossal inequalities in distribution of wealth and land, and a childish admiration for machines which might be converted into the cult of the tractor and the turbine. The present government has shrewdly compelled foreigners to train its native workers, by requiring that 90 percent of the employees in all industrial, commercial and financial concerns shall be Mexican citizens. It seems highly probable that Mexican officials dream remotely of seizing all the manifold foreign enterprises within their borders after their people are competent to take charge of them. But nobody, except perhaps Mr. Hearst, believes that this or any such economic step will be taken soon.

In the first place, Mexico is still vitally dependent upon foreign capital and initiative. She is a poor nation, in spite of the silver which has been exploited steadily since the days of Cortez, and the petroleum supply which has been lavishly abused for the last thirty years. Mexico is essentially agricultural, 80 percent of her population being rural; yet a bare half of her land is arable—the rest comprising the great deserts of the Mesa del Norte, the sharp mountains which fringe the central plateau, and the steaming jungles of the south. Unless there is a constant infusion of capital from abroad Mexico will stagnate, as she had begun to do during the revolutionary period of 1910-1924 when financiers were frightened away by the collapse of that security which they had enjoyed under Porfirio Díaz. Without a merchant marine, an efficient agricultural system, or the means of manufacturing her own tools, this country is in the same position of colonial dependency which she has held for 400 years, though the rôle of Spain has now been taken by the capitalist nations. Awareness of this rather humiliating position explains the characteristic jingoism of the Calles government which, like a bully, has vented its arrogance not upon the

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ultimate objects of its hatred—the powerful exploiters of Mexico—but upon less perilous ones: native land-owners linked with the old régime, political dissenters at home, and the priesthood and laity of the Catholic Church.

To break economically with the United States, Great Britain and France, and cut the deep roots which they have struck into Mexican soil, would be suicide. For a great many years Mexico will not dare do what the Soviet Union achieved at a single stroke in 1917. Nobody knows better than General Calles the supreme importance of getting on with the oil interests of Harry F. Sinclair and Sir Henri Deterding, or the Standard Fruit Company and Henry Ford and the French shipping lines. Wisely he tells his people that Mexico is not yet ready for "direct enterprises," which require "personal unselfishness, probity, and the desire to serve the collective interests. . . . For the present we must depend on private initiative."

The history of the orthodox Communist party in Mexico, the Bolshevist Leninist League, is shabby and unheroic. Founded in 1919, it reached its flood-mark of membership and power in 1926-1927, but never attained the standing of a major threat — chiefly because it found the Mexican peasantry taciturn and suspicious of its promises, and the industrial proletariat of the cities so insignificant in numbers (some 350,000 out of a national population of 16,000,000, as Mr. Carleton Beals has recently estimated). The activities of a noisy Communist *claque,* which abused General Calles and tried to foment rebellion in the army, led in 1930 to the breaking off of diplomatic relations with the U. S. S. R. Henceforth the government has never relaxed its hostility to the Communist party, which it has harried with the usual melodramatic fluster: suppression of soapbox oratory, raids upon meetings, and jail sentences. Recently it has given tacit encouragement to a Fascist organization called the Gold Shirts, whose favorite sport is brawling with Communists, Jews and Orientals. In conversation with the present writer late in 1934, Mexico's most famous Communist, Diego Rivera the artist, estimated that active members of the party in Mexico City amount to less than 1,000, divided between some 800 Leninists and 200 Trotzkyists (his own faction). "Although the Comintern itself has made many stupid mistakes here," he remarked, "the greatest handicap to the Communist program is that Mexico is an agrarian country, and cannot undergo a social revolution until it is industrialized. Not until the capitalist powers, especially the United States, lead the way to a new order can Mexico follow." Rivera, like most Communists, looks upon Russia as an apparently unique exception to the orthodox Marxian principle, i. e., that major class upheavals appear first and foremost in an industrial society.

Practical socialism and Communism in Mexico, then, have met with nothing but rebuff from a government which in its more flamboyant moments continues to speak in the phrases of *Das Kapital,* with scraps from Kropotkin and Bakunin also. This paradox is easily explained. In the early days of the National Revolutionary party, in 1915, when it was trying to gain popular favor in the midst of a torn and faction-ridden Mexico, Carranza and Obregón angled for the support of organized labor and obtained it; workmen fought in the so-called Red Battalions against Villa and turned the scales of victory. Their reward came two years later in Article 123 of the new Constitution, which was widely called at the time "the most progressive labor code ever drafted by any nation." The intellectuals who wrote it—chiefly university professors, liberal lawyers, and diplomats with a cosmopolitan viewpoint—embodied in it not a little of that Utopian idealism which in the closing years of the Great War was stirring about the world in many guises. Since its birth the Constitution of Mexico has remained a beautiful document, one to kindle the eloquence of any orator, but impractical in the daily workings of a semi-illiterate country ruled by guns and strong men. In common with all successful minorities, the National Revolutionary party has actually grown more conservative with the passing years; the humble school-teacher with utterances about equality and human brotherhood, who is now the undisputed Dictator of Mexico, is also one of the largest landowners in the central plateau since the days of the Marquis del Valle, and the rights of the peon are no longer his hourly concern.

The party continues to profess its love of the socialist idea largely as a sop to the people—the great lethargic mass of Indian farmers and laborers who some day will wake into national consciousness. Old fires of revolution still burn in their blood, and if they are goaded by too palpable wrong their numbers are great enough to wipe out every trace of *Callismo.* Meanwhile the government knows that, while it may juggle with the ballot-box and enrich itself discreetly, it must also pacify the masses with occasional land distribution, roads and schools, and the promise of proletarian supremacy in the golden years to come. Like George Meredith's hero, the Mexican government is eager to pledge itself for eternity but shrinks from being bound to the morrow. That such double-dealing will finally provoke another era of blood seems highly probable. Just now, however, Mexico, with her ancient charm and her infinite possibilities for achievement, is in the unhappy position of a country which unites apparently the worst aspects of capitalistic privilege and the saddest mistakes of anti-religious Communism, without the frankness of either.

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WERE THEY DOMESTICATED?

By WILLIAM EVERETT CRAM

WE NATURALLY take it for granted that all our domestic beasts and birds are simply wild animals tamed by man, a natural enough assumption surely, but just when did they first come under man's dominion? So far as I can find out, not one of them within the period covered by historical research. Take the following list, every member of which appears to have been domesticated long before the beginning of history: elephant, camel, llama, reindeer, horse, ass, cows, sheep, goats, rabbits, dogs, cats; swans, geese and ducks, turkeys, peacocks, guinea fowls, pigeons, parrots and barnyard fowls.

Individuals of practically every other species have been caught in adult life and kept in captivity from time to time during our own epoch as well as in the past, while others have been taken when young and raised as pets, but one and all of these, whenever they have managed to escape, have reverted at once to the wild life of their species. Individuals and groups of our domestic animals and birds have also run wild wherever conditions were favorable, but these or their descendants invariably return to a state of domestication when once more brought under man's control.

In the case of the elephant, the return to the wild state appears to have continually increased since prehistoric times so that now it much less often breeds in confinement than formerly: the females, especially those of the African species, being most frequently permitted to now meet the males in the waste-lands and to remain there until the time for giving birth to their young, when they are easily recaptured. Elephants have been unknown as domestic animals in Europe since the early days of the Roman Empire.

The mammoth, now unquestionably proved to have continued the life span of its race in northern Asia, Europe and North America during earlier ages of man's epoch here, may also possibly have been under domestication then, though of course we have no evidence concerning this either one way or the other. It is equally possible that a great many other species of both mammal and bird life now known only as untamable wild creatures were at some time or another domesticated. Creatures of any sort kept in captivity for exhibition to the public are in no way to be classed in this group.

A truly domestic animal may I think be classed somewhat as follows: one which either singly or in groups may be allowed to forage for itself in an enclosure covering either acres or miles of area, for the day or for the season, at the end of which period it will either return of its own accord or may be easily driven home to the shelter provided for it by man for the night or for the approaching winter, and which has inherited this trait from countless generations of ancestors who have in their turn followed a similar routine of habit.

In my boyhood I had a tame woodchuck and a tame hawk both captured in infancy and both permitted to go and come as they pleased, but at the approach of autumn the woodchuck wandered away to other fields and pastures while the hawk flew southward for the winter. Neither of them ever returned to be pets again, but the hawk came back the following spring and alighting on the weather-vane of the barn greeted me with his low chattering notes and then flew away to the north, thus assuring me that he had at least survived the winter.

In the days of falconry, and even now to a much more limited extent, falcons, merlins and goshawks were either taken from the nest or aerie or else caught in mature life and trained to chase and kill their prey and then to return to the wrist of the falconer, when the hood was at once slipped on over their heads to prevent their sighting other game, and at all times except when out on hunting excursions with their masters they were kept fastened to the perch and fed by hand.

The camel of Asia and the llama of South America evidently sprang from the same stock. The camel, formerly abundant in Europe and North America, has never, so far as our history goes, been found in the wild state except as a temporary fugitive from man's control. The llama of South America had long been under domestication by the Indian tribes there when the Spaniards first steered westward across the South Atlantic.

The reindeer of northern Europe and Asia may be classed as a wild deer tamed and trained for man's use. Some are bred in confinement while others are caught and trained after reaching maturity. All attempts to tame the American reindeer or carabou have been unsuccessful.

Dogs, I think it will be generally admitted, furnish us the finest example of complete domestication that we have and their grasp of the human language exceeds that of all the other animals. Descended as they are from inferior stock, wolves, hyenas, jackals, they appear to be always under the pressure of a sense of great inferiority to their masters, and show the most intense gratitude for the slightest favour done them; but the old mob spirit and instinct for hunting in packs so characteristic of their ancestral race, still lingers with them and at times leads on the highest-bred members of their race to join with mongrels in the chase of cattle, sheep and deer. At such times the sheer lust for killing seems to overwhelm whatever true sportsmanslike instinct they may possess.

Cats, on the other hand, descended from the finest group of all animal life, are only partially domesticated, are conscious of not the slightest sense of inferiority to man or anything else, and accept his hospitality whenever it happens to suit their convenience without the slightest sense of obligation on their own part. As hunters they are cold-blooded and cruel, but, so far as my own observation goes, never descend to hunting packs and stop their killing when the requirement for food for themselves or their families has been satisfied. This holds true I believe of all the cat tribe, wild or tame.

It has long been a subject of controversy whether the European wild cat is the progenitor of our domestic tabbies or is simply the tame cat run wild. In this country we have no true representative of the wild cat race, our so-called wild cat being a lynx, and our cougars, jaguars

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and tiger cat apparently just western representatives of the eastern leopard and panther family. The Egyptian cats, found embalmed in tombs where they have lain preserved for thousands of years, are strikingly like our house cats of today.

When this question of the prehistoric domestication of all our tame animals and birds first came up, the only exceptions that were offered were the turkey and the guinea fowl, and at the time I accepted these as genuine exceptions; but after looking more thoroughly into the matter I became convinced that this was not the case. Judging from whatever evidence I am able to find, the answer is as follows. All attempts to domesticate the native wild turkey of North America have proved unsuccessful. The common turkey of our barnyards belongs to a different species: the Mexican turkey, which appears to have been under domestication on the farm lands of the Incas and the agricultural tribes of Mexican Indians at the time of the Spanish invasion. The guinea hen is abundant as a wild species in Africa and has frequently been captured and tamed during our own period, but researches among the ruins of the early Roman civilization prove convincingly that it was kept as one of their domestic fowls by the early Romans. In a general way, the same holds true of the parrots of Africa and South America.

How can we successfully explain all this? Our peasants and agriculturists and hunting tribes generally, of ancient and modern times, have certainly not lacked initiative or capability in the way of capturing the young and adults of animals and birds of all sorts and rearing and breeding them in captivity, and just why have none of these later attempts at domestication proved successful?

Are there two distinct varieties of our so-called lower animals: those which can be domesticated and those which cannot? Did prehistoric man bring under domestication every kind of animal fitted for it, so that those who came after him had nothing left to work on, or was prehistoric man more capable of this work?

Was every one of our domestic creatures first brought into being as a form of life Divinely intended for man's control, just one little item in God's plan?

To the first of these suggestions it might be answered that, so far as outdoor observation goes, the various genera and species in which our domestic animals are scientifically classed as most nearly related are certainly not of the type from which one would naturally choose for this purpose.

To the second the answer might be, that our present-day low savage tribes, which in no way differ from what scientific evidence shows the cave man to have been, apparently possess neither the desire nor the capability for bringing wild animals of any sort whatever under domestication.

In spite of my early training in science along the line of evolution and the origin of species, I find myself rather inclined toward the last of the three until some more plausible explanation is offered us.

A Letter

A letter is the heart's good-will in brief,
But more than "yours sincerely" must be said;
Persuasive images induce belief
When fused with sure thought whereby feeling's led.

Thus you'll forgive me if I here relate
Facts that unformalized were meaningless:
That I stay home, drink coffee, sit up late,
With grudging hand apportioning excess,

Bent over the blear visions these have wrought,
Whose memoirs I outline with veinéd eye,
Making anatomies of mortal thought
Whose rich embodiment I must supply.

And when the eyes grow tired I slowly play
Rameau and Frescobaldi, Bull and Byrd;
If some few bars close to the music stay,
The twisted wheel of spinning Fate is heard,

Constrained, complete. And with this formal doom
The free imagination I involve,
Weave and unweave, Penelopeian loom
Whose pattern stays, the swift heart to resolve.

For in the shapeless vestiges of being,
The very agony of dying breath,
Beside whom we sit on with eyes unseeing,
There's that we cannot face, which we call death,

But, naming it, subdue it to our norm,
Made human by old symbols of man's worth,
By custom weathered in traditional form,
Till the clean house, the black hearse, the thrown earth,

Of one brief segment of eternity
Remain the several memories from what were.
They are not she nor what she meant to me,
But by this rosary I come to her,

Fingering the hard beads that shape the whole,
Though every tenth gives meditation pause,
And fancy from past insight draws the soul,
The assured effect of one primal cause.

Not otherwise, dear, do I come to you,
Not otherwise than to the type, the way,
Earthen image of the one God and true,
Form where my hand and sentiment may stray

On the bare, marble surface of calm duty,
Unchanging real where the unreal may move
Through the firm patterns which reveal its beauty,
And in your beauty is concealed my love.

J. V. CUNNINGHAM.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—At an audience granted to 400 students attending a course of lectures on Catholic Action at the Gregorian University, the Holy Father declared that Catholic Action is "the cooperation of the laity with the hierarchical apostolate [and] an admission of the laity to that hierarchical apostolate." In a recent article *L'Osservatore Romano* of Vatican City pays a tribute to Michael Williams as a writer and organizer and describes THE COMMONWEAL as a "model for Catholic Action in the field of thought." * * * In approving the organization of the Philosophic Society of Quebec, Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve, O. M. I., Archbishop of Quebec, said, "It is time, I think, for it to be understood that Thomism is not a philosophy of the seminary, but the natural philosophy of the human mind. The hour has come for this philosophy of the Angelic Doctor to be spread among us in all the orders of thought and rational activity." * * * The thirty-second annual meeting of the National Catholic Education Association at Chicago, April 24 and 25, has been announced. * * * At the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems held at Cincinnati, March 26, Archbishop McNicholas warned industry and capitalism to adopt a Christian moral code if they did not wish to fall victims of the ever more powerful totalitarian state. * * * Sigrid Undset has become a regular contributor to *Credo,* which has recently been transformed from a Swedish Catholic periodical to an organ for Catholics of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, with material in each of the three languages.* * * The Catholic Association for International Peace will hold its ninth annual conference at Washington, April 22 and 23. Guests at the International Dinner the first evening will include foreign diplomats and members of the hierarchy. * * * The Reverend Bruno Bitter, S. J., president of the Catholic University of Tokyo, declared that the institution now has a student body of 2,000, most of whom, along with the faculty, are non-Christians. Father Bitter praised the Japanese for their loyalty and integrity. * * * Georgetown University on March 25 presented Monsignor Edward A. Pace with the decoration of the Camillo Cardinal Mazzella Academy of Philosophy for his work at the Catholic University.

The Nation.—The social and economic security measure over which the House Ways and Means Committee has been pondering since its recommendation by the President several weeks ago, was finally prepared for submission with drastic divergences from the President's plan. A gradual elimination of federal tax-exempt securities was one provision, and another was a compulsory old-age pension plan. * * * A Democratic landslide in Chicago returned Mayor Edward J. Kelly with 75.84 percent of the vote, an unprecedented majority. For the first time in the history of the United States' second largest city, the candidate carried every one of the fifty wards. * * * Taxing the profits out of war was indicated by coincidental actions in the House and Senate. * * * Former Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, on the witness stand in his own defense in the trial of the government's case charging him with unlawfully avoiding income tax payment, said that he simply selected five out of nine measures which were proposed to him by competent legal advice as being within his statutory rights for the reduction of his income tax payment. He said that he would have considered it "stupid" not to have taken advantage of the loopholes in the law. * * * Myron C. Taylor, chairman of the board of the United States Steel Corporation, at the annual meeting of the stockholders, reported new orders in the first quarter of this year totaling 1,774,272, against 1,504,015 tons in the first quarter last year, and 631,000 in the first quarter of 1933, the last three months of Republican rule. This was enough to keep 41.9 percent of the company's plant capacity busy this year, as against 35½ percent last year and 14.9 percent in the first quarter of 1933. "With these figures before us and fully realizing that our country is still young, rich in natural resources and has a low density of population—a density one-fifth that of France, one-eighth of Germany and one-tenth that of the British Isles—our optimism should dispel the clouds which the depression has brought forth," he said. He met with blank surprise the charges of a woman that he employed high-priced industrial spies to further the security of the company union in the steel business. * * * The pink slip income tax publicity nuisance was repealed by the Senate.

The Wide World.—British diplomacy was busy at various European capitals, and from such reports as were available it seemed that Captain Eden was trying to promote an "Eastern Locarno" without Germany. Moscow dispatches rumored that His Majesty's government would not regard French entry into Germany, in the event of a Nazi aggressive move against an Eastern power, as a violation of the treaties signed at Locarno in 1925. Conversations at Warsaw and Prague were regarded as particularly important. British hesitancy to underwrite what amounts to a military alliance between France and Russia was still marked, however, and the Cabinet was said to be fully aware of the conflicts sundering English public opinion. * * * The London press asserted that the German government had ordered the class of 1915, estimated at more than 500,000, to report for medical examinations on April 1. If this group is conscripted, the first official move will have been made to train German man-power. The total number of eligible males is 8,500,000, according to Reich statistics of 1933. * * * Ecclesiastical problems, both Protestant and Catholic, were intensified throughout Germany. A good instance is reported from Oldenburg. Opposition Protestants gathered in church one evening to listen to an

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address, being obliged first to force open doors locked by the Nazis. These then turned out the lights and shut off the organ current. The congregation, nothing daunted, sat in the glow of flickering candles and sang lustily without organ accompaniment. * * * The Belgian Cabinet decided that the belga should be devalued 28 percent. On April 2 the Brussels Bourse and other markets reopened. Premier van Zeeland declared that steps would be taken to insure the population against unwarranted price rises. * * * The governments of Chile and the Argentine invited the United States, Brazil and Peru to join hands in efforts to end the Chaco war. It is urged that a truce be agreed upon, subject to guarantee by the mediatory powers.

* * * *

Scottsboro and the NRA.—The United States Supreme Court ruled, April 1, that Clarence Norris and Hayward Patterson, two of the eight Negroes sentenced to death in the famous Scottsboro case, for attacking a white woman in 1931, should have new trials. In the Norris case the ground for Chief Justice Hughes's opinion was that for years Negroes had been debarred from jury duty in Jackson and Morgan Counties, Alabama, regardless of their abilities. The opinion on the Patterson case denied the contention of the State of Alabama that the Supreme Court had no jurisdiction. This is the second time the Supreme Court has set aside the death penalty in the Scottsboro case, the first time on the grounds that the Negroes had not been provided with adequate counsel. Norris and Patterson have been the only defendants retried as a result of the earlier ruling and the State of Alabama is now preparing to try them for a third time. Samuel Leibowitz, chief defense counsel, characterized the latest Supreme Court decision as "the culmination of the hopes and ambitions of 15,000,000 Negro souls in America" and a "triumph for American justice." * * * The Supreme Court has also allowed the government to drop the Belcher case, considered by many observers the administration's strongest case for the testing of the NRA. It was an appeal from a decision on the case of William Belcher, an employer who admitted violating the wages and hours of the Lumber Code, by Judge Grubb of Alabama, who held that the code deprived a man of his property without due process of law. It is understood that Attorney-General Cummings had taken this step to postpone a Supreme Court test until the New Deal had built up a record of solid accomplishment.

Mexico.—A statement issued to the press by President Cardenas of Mexico was interpreted as indicating that the chief executive was isolating himself somewhat from the extremists on educational and religious questions. Declaring that recent manifestos do not "mean that we are carrying out any attack upon those who profess any religious belief, so long as they respect the law and the revolutionary institutions, or upon representatives of the university," the President claimed that the objectives of the government were "to avoid that the child and the youth be utilized as an instrument for the division of the Mexican people, converted into elements retarding the progress of the country, or infected with a consciousness of enmity toward the laboring classes." Addressing Catholic alumni in Washington, D. C., the Reverend Francis Borgia Steck, of the Catholic University, commented upon the fact that the clergy of Mexico cannot fairly be accused of having played politics. They, after all, did not bring about the fall of the Diaz régime, nor—despite the Constitution of 1917—were they viewed by Obregon as a force to be suppressed. It was only after 1926, when the Calles government began in earnest to enforce the anticlerical laws, that real trouble started. The cause of this strife is demonstrably the uncalled-for persecution launched by the Callistas. In Baltimore Archbishop Curley warned against spurious collectors of funds to aid Mexican Catholics in distress. He affirmed that the diocesan authorities would be glad to receive and dispense alms given to aid the many exiles now resident in the United States. A National Committee for the Defense of American Rights in Mexico has been organized. Mr. Luke E. Hart is general counsel. The address is 912 American Security Building, Washington, D. C.

Frank Spearman, Medalist.—On Laetare Sunday, the University of Notre Dame awarded the Laetare Medal to Mr. Frank H. Spearman, novelist. Years ago Mr. Spearman was one of the most popular fiction writers in the United States, "Whispering Smith" selling like a world series game ticket. He had unearthed a good vein of material in the American railroader, his nerve and loyalty. "Robert Kimberly" was likewise a successful book. One fine day Mr. Spearman decided to become a Catholic, and with that adopted a resolution to support Catholic activity wherever possible. He gave generously of his time and gifts to religious causes and periodicals, notably the *Ave Maria*. "The Marriage Verdict" represented an effort to write a Catholic novel, but elicited very little response from the public. Thereafter Mr. Spearman was active chiefly as a scenario writer. Born in Buffalo, New York, in 1859, the present recipient of the Laetare Medal resides in Hollywood, California. Concerning the medal itself, note that it has been awarded annually during the past fifty-two years, and that recipients include John Gilmary Shea, Agnes Repplier, Elizabeth Nourse, Alfred E. Smith, John McCormack and Mrs. Genevieve Garvan Brady.

More Ounces of Crime Prevention.—National Boy and Girl Scout movements are declared by the Reverend Edward Roberts Moore, director of the Division of Social Action of the Catholic Charities of the New York Archdiocese, to be outstanding aids for preventing crime-breeding effects of the depression on youth. "Loss of security has weakened character, has shattered morale, has increased crime," Dr. Moore reports. "Security will come back—but in the meantime the organizations that operate in the field of character building, of social action, must help to hold the fort. Youth particularly is their

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field and who is suffering more today than youth? The community must do something for youth." There are 69 Catholic troops of the Boy Scouts of America in the New York Archdiocese and 144 troops of Catholic Girl Scouts. "Catholic boys' clubs, which are being as widely organized as practicable, have proved a real positive force in the community of inestimable value in curbing delinquency where it has been found most prevalent—among boys in their teens," Dr. Moore continues, and says that there are approximately 2,000 boys in units of the Catholic Boys' Brigade. He cites the efforts of his division which have resulted in chaplains at summer camps both for adults and young people, providing religious services for 17,000 persons. Fifteen camps for boys and girls provide vacations for many children in the archdiocese with a steadily increasing registration each year.

The Acolyte.—The *Acolyte,* which is published every two weeks by Our Sunday Visitor Press, and has as a subhead, "To Serve the Priest," in its last issue, Volume 11, Number 7, has a genuinely moving *Vale atque ave.* Father Michael Andrew Chapman says a most Christian farewell as editor, paying his respects and thanks to friends and foes alike. Among the former he mentions the Bishop, "at once my Diocesan and my 'Boss' in the Sunday Visitor Press," and says of him, "Never was editor left more free by proprietor to mold his policy and seek his material. He gave me the job, ten years ago, and he has never once interfered (as well he might) with my doing of it. And now he has shown his appreciation of my poor efforts by giving me 'preferment' which I cannot but feel undeserved." The new editor, Father Aquinas Knoff, contents himself in this issue modestly with an anonymous "box" in which he pleads for the continued help and criticisms of the readers, while in another corner appears the advertisement, "We propose to enlarge the *Acolyte* to a 32-page paper and publish once a month instead of fortnightly. What do you think of this, Father?" The articles in this issue are "Would You Have Your Listeners Listen?" by O'Brien Atkinson, Catholic Evidence Guild; "Purposes and Possibilities of a Complete Parish Census," by a Mission Helper, Servant of the Sacred Heart; "Hymn Singing," by the Reverend K. Jerome; "Causes of Failure in the Sacred Ministry," by the Reverend Francis J. Remler, C. M.; "I. F. C. A. M. P. B.," by the Reverend Edward S. Schwegler; "Sidelights on Philosophic Implications and Complications," by Philosophus Regustus; "Saint Paul and the Mystical Body of Christ," by the Reverend Manher J. Rellim; and "Sermon Suggestions on Conversion," by the Reverend E. M. Betowski.

A Political Trial.—On April 1 the Sacramento criminal syndicalism trial ended with the conviction of eight defendants and the acquittal of six others. The defendants were arrested July 14, 1934, with four others who were released in the meantime. The trial lasted sixteen weeks and the jury was out sixty-six hours. The single charge the jury convicted on was "conspiracy to overthrow the government." The prosecution originated in the great Red scare of last year and the agricultural strikes of 1933, and was supposed to have been backed by the Associated Farmers and the Industrial Association, enemies of militant unions, especially among farm workers. An attempt was made to make the case a new political, Sacco-Vanzetti affair, but factionalism among the radicals and perhaps the already well-established reputation of California as reactionary, kept the case from assuming any such proportions, although it may well loom larger in the future. A united front of the Socialist, Communist and Workers parties, the Civil Liberties Union, International Labor Defense, Non-partizan Labor Defense, and three unions was formed January 15, but broken January 26 when the C. P. insisted that some of its satellite organizations be admitted with voting power. Following that, the W. P. claimed the C. P. allowed its own members to stay in jail to discipline them for party irregularity and permitted chances for proper propagandizing to slip by, and the C. P. charged the only non-party defendant (Norman Mini left the C. P. for the W. P.) with being a stool pigeon. The counsels for the Communist I. L. D. and the Workers Party N. L. D. even clashed in court. Innumerable complaints at the state's conduct of the case have been made. The Communist defendants insisted on a strangely reformist policy, in keeping with their new plans for a labor party.

Catholic Music Records.—Recently the R. C. A.-Victor Company recorded sixteen chants sung by the pupils of two New York City parochial schools, St. Martin's and St. Philip Neri's. It is intended that these will be fitted into the curriculum of Catholic schools and will supplement the "Catholic Music Hour" books, which contain the texts of the chants recorded. The Victor Company started the recording of liturgical music with an album of the Gregorian Mass, sung faultlessly by the monks of St. Pierre de Solesmes Abbey. Following this, an album of miscellaneous chants sung by the Pius X Choir of the College of the Sacred Heart, New York City, was issued. Then came a recording of the complete Gregorian Requiem, sung by the same choir and with the responses of the Reverend V. C. Donovan, O. P., who for years directed the Dominican liturgical studies in Rome. The next release was an album of medieval and modern sacred music sung by the choir of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, the most important papal choir. Catholic records have been published regularly so that now people with access to phonographs can hear brilliant renditions of much of the best church music.

Sterilization Conflicts.—The battle over sterilization was recently intensified in Europe and the United States. The most sensational disclosure came from Bordeaux, France, where the police are said to have discovered a movement to organize a "sterilization cult" throughout the country. It was reported that this operation, sought as a means of evading military duty, had already been performed on fifteen men in Bordeaux and several others

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in the vicinity. The Associated Press reported that an alleged German Communist agitator had been arrested in Brussels on the instance of the French police and questioned about instigating this campaign for illegal operations. In the state of New Jersey a proposed sterilization bill was bitterly debated, April 2, before the New Jersey State Senate Public Health Committee at Trenton. Major Eugene F. Kinkead opposed the bill in the name of "1,000,000 Catholics." In Iowa the Dubuque *Telegraph-Herald and Times-Journal* joined the diocesan organ, the *Witness,* in pointing out fallacies in the arguments for a sterilization law. Governor Talmadge of Georgia has vetoed a bill passed by the State Legislature providing for the sterilization of habitual criminals and insane and feeble-minded persons. Sterilization bills have recently been introduced in Pennsylvania and Missouri. In the meantime charges that men and women had been forced by relief workers, under penalty of being denied relief, to submit to sterilization operations in Contra Costa County, California, were being investigated, while a similar charge was made in Ohio.

* * * *

New York Relief.—In New York City a Mayor's Committee in association with the Russell Sage Foundation recently published a report on unemployment and unemployment relief. One out of every three persons gainfully occupied in New York City during 1930 is now unemployed: that is, 1,000,000 persons. This unemployment affects 666,000 families, or 2,664,000 persons, which is 37 percent of the total population. On March 1, there were 341,451 families and single persons getting work or home relief and 325,000 families with unemployed wage earners not yet getting relief. In the three years, 1932-1935, $312,918,322 was spent in New York City on relief, the average per family being $51.36 monthly in 1932 and $42.15 in 1934. The committee concluded that "the majority of the 341,451 families on relief are being forced to live on a standard of life 40 percent below the minimum fixed by the experts in welfare work." The food budgets are 11 percent below minimum; the maximum rent grants of $25 a month result in "appalling conditions"; and families are allowed $16.20 a year for clothing. Administration is bad because only 11.93 percent of the outlay is spent upon it and there is no long-time planning or appropriating. The committee proposes the fundamental question of subsistence or minimum relief, meaning minimum to preserve a decent standard of living. It believes in the latter and believes that to achieve it we should work immediately for a nation-wide employment service, for state unemployment insurance, for public works and work relief, and for adequate home relief. If work relief of various sorts is to replace the demoralizing dole in New York City, "nothing less than the willingness of the government to enter into competition with private industry" is necessary.

Work Relief.—The $4,800,000,000 work relief bill which finally passed the Senate by a vote of 68 to 16 languished in conference while relief funds grew critically low. Major specifications in the bill as it now stands are: $800,000,000 for highways, roads, streets and for grade-crossing eliminations; $500,000,000 for rural relief and rehabilitation; $100,000,000 for rural electrification; $450,000,000 for housing; $300,000,000 for projects for white-collar workers; $600,000,000 for the Civilian Conservation Corps; $900,000,000 for public projects of states and political subdivisions of states; $350,000,000 for sanitation, reforestation, flood control, prevention of coastal and soil erosion and miscellaneous projects, and $40,000,000 for advances to states and local governments for aid to schools. A broad margin of discretion was left to the President for shifting funds from any one of these provisions to another. Authority was also given to him to fix the wages payable on the new works projects, subject to the limitation that they shall not degrade private wages, and that rates of pay on federal building projects shall conform to the Davis-Bacon prevailing-wage act. The appropriation is the largest in the history of an American Congress.

Motohomes.—On April 1 Mrs. James Roosevelt dedicated a new type of low-cost home to the women of America. Motohome is a box-shaped, prefabricated house which is to sell for as little as $3,800. The exterior has aluminum-trimmed grey walls of a durable cement and asbestos composition; in the corners are casement windows with blue frames and some models are provided with a sun deck. The interior makes good use of every cubic foot of space and the walls are covered with washable paper, available in many shades. In addition to its pleasing appearance the Motohome is a remarkable witness to Yankee ingenuity. "The Magic Moto-Unit," which occupies a small compartment in the center of the house, "contains all of the plumbing, heating, electrical and mechanical devices for the entire house." Standard equipment includes air-conditioning, built-in radio and electric clock, bathroom scales, two days' supply of groceries and a miniature library of helpful hints to housewives, mothers and home-owners. The bathroom washbasin is large enough for use as baby's bath; kitchen equipment includes an electric refrigerator, an electric dishwasher, built-in lighting and an electric exhaust to banish cooking odors. When a family wishes additional rooms it is a simple matter to enlarge the home. After a foundation is laid, one of the outside walls is merely "unbuttoned" and new standard sections put into place. The Motohome is said to be soundproof, fire-proof and—what should please General Johnson—termite-proof. After two years of testing under rigorous laboratory and actual living conditions, American Houses, Incorporated, has placed six standard models on the market and a New York department store has advertised complete furnishing of the four-room home for $1,200. Under a finance plan soon to be announced a $3,800 Motohome may be acquired free and clear by paying only $38 a month for 15 years—a sum which also covers life and fire insurance. Motohome may be one practical answer to America's quest for low-cost housing.

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The Play

By GRENVILLE VERNON

Two Communist Plays

IN "AWAKE AND SING," the play of Jewish life in the Bronx, the Group Theatre recently revealed to the New York public a new dramatist of real ability—Clifford Odets. In that play Mr. Odets showed a keen sense of dramatic values and for a young playwright an unusual mastery of theatrical technique; but far more important than these, the ability to visualize and project living men and women by means of significant action, and vivid, realistic, pungent dialogue. The characters of "Awake and Sing" were entirely Jewish, and Mr. Odets was evidently working in a milieu and in a spirit which he thoroughly understood. That Mr. Odets is a radical, even perhaps a Communist, might have been gathered from the play, not so much by what was definitely spoken, but what was implicit. Neither his sense of character nor his telling of the story were hobbled by the intrusion of the author speaking in his own person. And this was good art. In the two one-act plays which the Group Theatre has now presented, Mr. Odets is unfortunately no longer the artist, but frankly the propagandist, and the result is far less satisfying. Moreover in these plays the characters are primarily non-Jewish, and Mr. Odets gives to them no such sense of verity either in action or dialogue as he displayed in "Awake and Sing." Indignation and intensity may be admirable things in the drama, but only when they are held in check; if they are left to run wild they destroy verity of character and of theme, leaving the figures of the play mere puppets, devoid of their own life, and existing only in the heated fancy of the author. This was what happened in "Till the Day I Die" and to a large extent in "Waiting for Lefty."

"Till the Day I Die" is laid in Germany under the rule of the Nazis. The story is of a young Communist who is forced by the Nazis to become an informer, or rather he pretends to become an informer to save his life and reason. He does not really betray his comrades, but his comrades, including his own brother and the girl he loves, think he has betrayed them, and in the end he shoots himself as the only way to prove that he has remained faithful to his ideal. In the course of the play are introduced a number of stock characters; the Nazis all either hysterical, degenerate, brutal or stupid; the Communists, idealistic heroes. The result is that without exception the characters are as unreal in action and speech as the figures of old-time bourgeois melodrama. Moreover, the author is forever present, striking dramatic attitudes, spouting communistic sentiments in communistic jargon. Not for a moment is there the sense of reality, and what effects are obtained are obtained through the most obvious melodramatic means. In short, Mr. Odets neither feels nor understands the people he is trying to depict. That the actors are most of them excellent helps little. Such artists as Alexander Kirkland, Margaret Barker, Bob Lewis, Lewis Leverett and Roman Bohnen are thrown away.

"Waiting for Lefty" is a much better play. Here at least Mr. Odets is dealing with a scene and with characters he has seen and known, at least superficially. When he condescends to have them speak in their own persons, they speak the language of the New York streets, the language of taxi-drivers, labor leaders, *agents provocateurs*. The main action, and by far the most interesting and vital portion of the play, takes place in the scenes representing a meeting of taxi-drivers, with the officers of the union trying to prevent a strike, and the radicals insisting on one. Speeches are made from the stage, and actors are interspersed in the audience to heckle the speakers. These scenes are exciting, and despite the overdose of communistic propaganda are on the whole true to life. But the scenes between, depicting the evils of capitalistic civilization, of what happens in the homes of the workers, in the hospitals, in theatrical offices, are stereotyped bits of communistic hokum, and not particularly good hokum. Mr. Odets hasn't taken the trouble to saturate himself with the spirit which might have informed his figures; he has simply taken age-old puppets and situations, given them a revolutionary twist, and let them go at that. That this isn't enough for a serious dramatist goes without saying; it isn't enough even for effective propaganda. As in its companion piece, the acting in "Waiting for Lefty" is better than the play. Especially good are Russell Collins, Lewis Leverett, Bob Lewis, Roman Bohnen, George Heller and Mr. Odets himself.

Yet the production of these plays by radical writers and the interest they have aroused ought to be pondered by the established dramatists, as well as by the playwrights of the future. Such plays as Mr. Odets's and Mr. Maltz's "Black Pit" have, it is true, little to do with the great mass of the American people. They are distinctly foreign in emphasis and appeal primarily to a small coterie. They are not American or for the average American. But one thing they have—earnestness. Perhaps hate and envy rather than love are their basic passions, but at least they are not trivial. They are coarse in language and crude in action, but they are alive. Too many of our established playwrights have lately been turning out mere confections, plays which are amusing but little more. It is time the playwrights who believe Communism to be destructive of all our civilization has built up through the centuries show some of the earnestness displayed by these communistic writers. In Emmet Lavery we have one such new dramatist. It is only through such dramatists that the theatre will reach the heights, for Communism is essentially materialistic, and materialism is barren of the things of the imagination. The spirit alone can fructify. (At the Longacre Theatre.)

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Communications

MEXICO

Oak Park, Ill.

TO the Editor: You aren't fair to Episcopalians in your summary of the controversy within the Episcopal Church regarding the Mexican situation. Of the three points you raise, (1) that the Episcopal Church has refused to go on record as disapproving the recent actions of the Mexican government, (2) that this action may be construed as an attack upon the "high church" membership, and (3) that this action was also based on the assumption that Episcopalianism would "get by" because the brunt of the attack was against Catholicism, none is entirely correct.

First, the Episcopal Church hasn't officially refused to condemn the Mexican government's action, and probably never will in just so many words. In fact, I think you can bank on it that the Episcopal Church will declare itself in favor of the rights of religious liberty and against religious persecution whenever that question, as such, comes before the church to be decided upon. Other matters may be handled differently. Of that more later.

Secondly, there is a grain of truth in your assertion that the expressed unwillingness of many Episcopalians unequivocally to denounce the Mexican government is connected in some way with the stand taken by certain Anglo-Catholics, but it is hardly as you have put it. To get back of this, it is necessary to know that certain Anglo-Catholics have taken a stand stanchly behind the Roman Catholic Church and have resorted to rather questionable means to get the entire Episcopal Church behind them. But Episcopalians won't be hamstrung, and I fancy that most of them can't as yet see themselves in the position of the Roman Catholic Church right or wrong.

The third point of yours is the least important, because the Episcopalian factor in Mexico is an almost negligible one. Seriously, I don't think it would ever enter Episcopalian minds just as you have stated it. It is worthy of consideration, however, that the Episcopal Church in Mexico has acceded to the requirements of the government and has managed to keep going in places where the Roman Catholic Church has been forced out. A native Mexican, Salinas y Velasco, was elected bishop of the Mexican Episcopal Church recently, in line with the government's ruling against foreign-born clergy. It is significant, perhaps, that Bishop Salinas y Velasco is now living in Mexico City, and not in El Paso or elsewhere.

But to come to the point of what I have to say, I wish to call your attention to the fact that certain specific charges have been made publicly by members of the Episcopal Church against the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico, which are the real basis of Episcopalians' reluctance to join in an unequivocal protest against the actions of the Mexican government, and which so far have gone unanswered. These charges are of a most serious nature. "The Mexican Roman Catholic Church," according to the Reverend William B. Spofford, an Episcopal clergyman and editor of an Episcopalian journal, the *Witness,* has engaged "in a counter-revolution, with archbishops, bishops and priests leading private armies. On at least one occasion they set fire to a train and stood by while people were roasted to death, and they have slaughtered in cold blood hundreds of opponents, including not a few officers of our own congregations." Names, dates and places are lacking from the public charges, but it is charged they are in possession of officials of the Episcopal Church, in particular, the presiding bishop, who, although he has figured in the center of the whole controversy, has not denied possession of them.

Perhaps this will aid your understanding of the present attitude of the Episcopal Church. Perhaps, too, you will want to help clear away some of the smoke hanging over the whole affair and help us find the truth.

CHARLES HENRY MITCHELL.

OUR LAWYERS' PREDICAMENT

Markesan, Wis.

TO the Editor: Since there is an analogy between legal and general composition, it would have been more fitting, in my humble opion, if Mr. Urch in addressing "Our Lawyers' Predicament" (COMMONWEAL, February 8, 1935), to the average lay reader, had been more careful and patient as regards simple explanation of what such lay readers would consider to be interchangeable terms. For there is a nice distinction both in England and this country between an attorney-at-law and a lawyer; between the common law and judicial finding in courts of last resort upon the substantive law.

The United States Constitution, strictly speaking, has no common-law history, nor has the federal jurisdiction under it. Of the forty-eight states, only two are common-law ones. This leaves forty-five code states and the state of Louisiana, which is under the Civil Code (i.e., Code Napoléon) and in which the political subdivisions are parishes. The common-law states are Massachusetts and Illinois.

The code states (except Louisiana) have selected what each desired from the body of the English common law and enacted it into code saying, "This and this only shall be our law." They have poured themselves into molds and practise in them is set and rigid. In Massachusetts and Illinois the whole body of the English common law is in force except where especially changed by statute. In these the practise is elastic and historic, all distinctions and differences being minutely framed, observed and followed.

Hence it is easily discernible in what state jurisdictions the practise requires the more work and confining study and from out of which, as a result, come the greater proportion of resourceful pleaders. Great judges result from men of character going to school while sitting on the bench to great students of the law practising before them. Great law schools result in jurisdictions in which great preceptors of character are talented to teach. Great law libraries result in jurisdictions into which everything is gathered, kept and preserved.

EUGENE A. MORAN.

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FOR MEN OF GOOD-WILL

Detroit, Mich.

TO the Editor: Can we not say that our world is being cursed by a plague of modern Julian apostates? The sinister silence at Washington concerning the notorious flouting below the Rio Grande of every sacred principle underlying our own institutions gives color to the impression that the Christian precepts upon which our government is founded are being sacrificed to chimerical advantages of sordid barter and sale.

Consequently, the news item in THE COMMONWEAL of March 1, telling of the Washington's birthday celebration by the National Conference of Jews and Christians in its crusade for civil and religious liberty, was most refreshing and timely. The item draws attention once more to the great importance of the conference's contribution to the solution of the most crucial of the problems of social and economic recovery. It is a contribution such as official Washington, in its attitude toward Mexican and Russian savagery, may well emulate. For all precedent clearly indicates that to continue to treat with indifference and scorn the indignant protests of our own citizens of all creeds against that savagery, is certain to result in profound dismay and disaster to both our government and our people.

A smiling complaisance with treachery and assassination for loot, and with a banditry which itches for spoils larded with the reeking fat of sacrilege, is celebrating its own repellent doom. It despises consequences of either time or eternity, and thus it blasts itself upon the benign bastions of a mocked and outraged Omnipotence.

Invincible patience, with equal trust in Divine Providence, therefore, will again restore sanity and peace to the world. The "folly of the cross" will again "destroy the wisdom of the wise."

All praise, then, is due the National Conference of Jews and Christians. The conference has a distinctively useful place in the solution of the difficulties besetting society. It is a linking of forces which have viewed the determined self-destruction of countless tyrants and their sycophants, and which will as surely draw shrouds over these modern Neros who are strutting their little day in befogged imagining that they are conquering the Unconquerable.

H. B. S.

LETTER-BOX

QUITE a few epistles have been received concerning Father Coughlin. William J. Carr, of New York, objects to the background of "altar, prayer and singing of hymns" used by the Detroit priest. "He then proceeds to discuss public questions in a most unpriestly and uncharitable manner. It is this mixture of priest and propagandist that offends so many people. . . . If Father Coughlin wishes to take an active part in the discussion of our Catholic problems, let him do it in 'mufti' and away from places supposed to be devoted to worship and not to 'billingsgate.'" On the other hand, Albert E. Mills, of Saugatuck, Conn., is convinced that "the journalism which works with 'truth' in the Father Coughlin plan for social justice will receive in return an immense increase of circulation." Writing on the subject of Indians, Anastasia M. Lawler has this to say: "There is no doubt that both Negro and Indian have suffered a forced growth into civilization compared with the gradual growth of our European ancestors from their tribal stage to the present, but having superinduced this hot-house growth on them, is it even just, much less kind, to put them back into the forest?" We can't think of anybody who wants to—certainly Professor Lips doesn't. In "Ethnopolitics and the Indians" he was arguing for the preservation of Indian tradition as part of the culture to be developed. On the subject of Lent, E. Murray, of New York, writes: "How do you get that way? Edition of March 15 says, 'Lent consists of diminishing food for lunch, etc.' Say, Lent consists of roll without butter and one cup of coffee for breakfast, and don't you forget it. It makes all the difference in the world!" Mr. Murray is a brother in suffering. The Reverend Raymond Vernimont, of Denton, Tex., writes: "The words of Christ, 'Without Me ye can do nothing,' will ever remain true. Numerous conferences have been held since the World War, but results have not been obtained and the Tower of Babel rises year by year, because God is not invoked." Paul J. Culhane, of Wilmington, Del., calls attention to two errors in the March 22 COMMONWEAL: "Gavick" instead of "McGavick" on page 596, and "J. Sheil" on page 598 instead of "B. J. Sheil." Thank you! We have unfortunately not been able to find space for all of Mr. Victor von Szeliski's critique of "Recovery or Regeneration," by Ralph Adams Cram (COMMONWEAL, November 2). Since the topic is now on the verge of being ancient history, it seems best to quote one or the other of Mr. Von Szeliski's remarks and let it go at that. "Mr. Cram's diagnosis of the present trouble is incorrect. Mechanization, mass production, inter-regional trade and the profit motive *as such* did not cause the depression; operating within a different institutional and legal framework, they would work well. As a matter of fact, even in its present broken-down condition the American industrial system is providing even the *unemployed* with a higher standard of living than the *employed* enjoy in areas organized on the basis of local self-sufficiency, e. g., the interior of China and Africa, or England during the Middle Ages. The remedy he offers is unattractive. Probably few COMMONWEAL readers have experienced as low a standard of living as would obtain in a homespun colony. Just what can Mr. Cram's 2,500 acres turn out in the way of leather, firewood, lumber, metallic ores, wool and flax, as well as foodstuffs? And by handicraft methods, how much clothing can be supplied, and how much footwear, winter food, soap, blankets, rugs, furniture, kitchenware, cutlery, heat and transportation per capita, not to mention books, leisure, study, travel, and THE COMMONWEAL itself?" In short, Mr. Von Szeliski does not believe the American people inclined to "swap their auto for a wagon."

THE EDITORS.

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Books

The Ultimate Antagonist

Anti-Christ, by Joseph Roth. New York: The Viking Press. $2.25.

OCTOBER, 1929, was the rock that wrecked more than a thousand ships. For some time prior to that date we were being constantly led to believe in our own self-sufficiency, so much so that God and the heaven He promised us paled in the splendor of prosperity and the earthly paradise that the gods of money and machinery would give us. Gold, created by God to be a blessing, and man-made machinery, were the two false gods. And how they failed us—those gods before whom so many of us worshiped, at least in the secrecy of our hearts. We rediscovered for ourselves the eternal verity of the first great commandment of God. If, however, from the salvage of these shipwrecks we find men and writers returning to reason and to godliness, the tragedy of errors shall not be in vain.

Mr. Joseph Roth, the author of several thought-provoking books, says in his latest work, "Anti-Christ":

"This is how he [Anti-Christ] makes his entrance, this is how he speaks: 'You were promised heaven, but I give you the earth. You were to believe in an unfathomable God, but I make you, yourselves, into gods. You think that heaven is more than earth, but earth is itself a heaven.' Looking backward, this seems a very fair résumé of life during that period of our recent history when our political and industrial leaders worshiped wealth: when we were told that nothing great is ever done except in prosperity, entirely forgetting the proverb that necessity is the mother of invention.

"We do not recognize Anti-Christ because he comes clad as an ordinary citizen; in every country he appears with nothing to distinguish him from the crowd. According to the legendary conception, he should have appeared with all the traditional attributes of hell—horns, tail, and cloven hoof, reeking of pitch and sulphur, surrounded by all the theatrical properties which our childish fantasy demands from a being of his nature and origin. . . .

"Anti-Christ has come; in a guise that we, who have been expecting him for years, fail to recognize. He already dwells in our midst, within us. The heavy shadow of his infamous wings is pressing down on us. We are even now smoldering in the icy glow of his baleful eyes. His struggling hands are stretching out toward our unsuspecting throats."

And so, through many vivid pages of imagery the indictment goes on. The author is relentless in his prosecution of Anti-Christ. He is strong, yet restrained; for evidently he has suffered. The entire book strikingly illustrates the principles of Saint Ignatius in the ever-modern study of "The Two Standards."

The chapter on "The Iron God" concludes with a letter of dismissal from the Master of a thousand tongues. It runs: "I dismiss you as from today (date of postmark) from my service. You are a refractory ton-

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Next Week

THE BETTER HOUSING PROBLEM, by James A. Moffett, Federal Housing Administrator, says: "The National Housing Act is being recognized today as one of the greatest measures of financial reform in the history of the United States. Its purpose is nothing less than the development of a nation-wide system of home mortgage financing, which is to be created out of the chaotic and disordered facilities available for the financing of home ownership heretofore. But this is not all. It was realized at the time of the passage of the act that the development of the new system would involve a long-range program, and that in the meantime facilities must be provided whereby the owners of real property of all kinds could obtain the necessary credit to repair the ravages of deterioration resulting from neglect during the depression." The Federal Housing Administrator follows this with brief, clear, specific details. . . . PHILIP HALE, by Walter Prichard Eaton, is a most thoroughly delightful paper by one literary man about another. Both are well known for wit and understanding, for a tolerant, good-natured cultivation. Hale may or may not be remembered as one of the first of the newspaper columnists in this country, and Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton remembers some of his best bits. . . . THE LAYMAN, by Jeremiah K. Durick, is a reply from a lay faculty member of a Catholic college to the indictment drawn by Mr. Ward Stames in this issue. Mr. Durick finds the treatment of lay professors and teachers by their clerical associates and superiors, all to the good. . . . GOLDEN AGE OR MILLENIUM, by Selden Peabody Delany, the noted editor and convert clergyman of the Episcopal Church, author of "Why Rome," is a graceful and mellow paper on human activism here below. It is not likely to cause any hair-tearing or excitement; rather the opposite, it indicates a strong, fertile source of peace.

gue. I have already replaced you by a more docile one. My day, our day, has dawned. I no longer need to treat you courteosuly, I can speak my mind—Hail the Anti-cross!" And recently the information has come to me that a new law has been contemplated in Germany by which all religious orders will be dissolved and the Jesuits effectively expelled. Possibly the all-seeing eye of Joseph Roth has not missed even this.

FRANCIS X. DOWNEY.

On Poetry

Aspects of Modern Poetry, by Edith Sitwell. London: Duckworth. 8/6.

A Hope for Poetry, by C. Day Lewis. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 6s.

Poetic Experience. An Introduction to Thomist Aesthetic, by Thomas Gilby, O.P. New York: Sheed and Ward. $1.00.

INTO her new book Miss Sitwell has put all the old things: her distaste for cricket, her fondness for the work of her brother, her remarkable capacity for more general fondnesses and hatreds and quite as remarkable incapacity to avoid faults of arrangement. Her violence, once perhaps necessary against her own critics, is hardly appropriate to a survey of the work of others. Even Sacheverell is not helped by her defense, and can hardly in any case have asked for it; and her offensive succeeds not against its objects but only against taste. Those who know Miss Sitwell only as rustic elegist or bucolic comedian, piping cacophony for clarinet before a pure façade, may fairly withhold welcome from a body of prose which forces the suspicion that the satyr in a periwig, epicene, pleasant, is in fact a schoolmadam in a country park. Whatever is useful in these essays can be found in others already written, some by Miss Sitwell, some by other people.

Mr. Cecil Day Lewis is among the few young poets of whom Miss Sitwell writes with indulgence. By other critics he is often named with Auden and Spender. To their work, and his own, his book is a Baedeker. "The object," he says, "is to make the reader look—or look again—in a certain direction." "Creative criticism," which he thinks is "rare as any other form of creative writing," he does not attempt, but a kind of criticism which "aims simply to erect sign-posts for the reader, to help him over difficult places, and to make him feel that the journey is worth undertaking." It is easy to agree, when one has read the book, that Mr. Lewis is "not writing primarily for the expert or the converted." What is more difficult is to discover who it is that he is writing for. It may be that there is in England, in sufficient number to justify condescension, a type of intellectual being much inferior to the intelligent American but not so simple as our plain man, whom yet a poet may hope to persuade of a hope for poetry. Mr. Day Lewis is sometimes very interesting; but the language and manner he affects, which are those of advertising rather than critical technique, are inadequate to the places where his ideas are most sensitive.

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The province of Father Gilby's book, one of the "Essays in Order," is that not of comment but of thought. "Aesthetic experience" would have been a fitter title for it, since nothing in the argument relates particularly to the poetic, and its author has apparently no such dislike for the word "aesthetic" as some scholastic writers show. Father Gilby considers it "the chief work of the philosophy of aesthetic to indicate a place for poetic experience in the map of knowledge by scientific pointer-readings." If it is not the chief it is certainly an important work, and I should like, after what I have said of the other books, to be able to congratulate Father Gilby on having accomplished it. But instead I confess that his book disappointed me as much as the others. The subtitle is misleading, for what Father Gilby has done is simply to rewrite romanticism in relatively Thomistic terms. As to pointer-readings, Father Gilby is cavalier. "People may be undecided," he says at one point, "about the nature of the distinction, still more about its application, but let us adopt it." His main thesis—that experience of beauty is direct, immediate, super-rational, inded supernatural, perception of the individual real—will not, I am afraid, be accepted by other scholastics without many radical *distinguos,* the nature and application of which they could easily decide; and in any case, few will attribute it to Saint Thomas. One whom it tended to persuade could correct his thought by reference to the admirable fifty-fifth note of Maritain's "Art and Scholasticism," which handles with patient precision not only the problem of Father Gilby's essay, but much that Father Gilby, to the chagrin of at least one, leaves unmapped.

CRAIG LA DRIERE.

Lion and Lamb

Why Wars Must Cease; edited by Rose Young. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00.

OF THE ten active women who have written chapters for this book, seven seem to take the elimination of war as a "cause," an end in itself. Therefore the tone of the book is too much that war is a complete and hideous integer, a unit aberration of mankind which in itself causes death, waste, demoralization and the present depression. It is considered the disease and not the fever. Perhaps this method was needed to give the book form and maximum propaganda value (it certainly has a most powerful message); but if so, it seems an error, because the chapters that treat war most as a constituent element of our civilization are the most interesting.

Emily Newell Blair, saying wars must cease "because in war you never know what you are fighting for," tells with a pleasing scepticism of economic motives behind any appearances, but she keeps too close to the "bogey man" theory of economics and the economic theory of history. Jane Addams writes more subtly than most about civilization, and finds that wars interfere with its growth. Although certain fruits of civilization seem to her the *summum bonum,* she certainly has a humanistic appreciation of modern culture. Her mistake makes her

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ORATE FRATRES
A Review Devoted to the Liturgical Apostolate

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more surprised at the withering, and more naive about the renewal than a philosopher should be.

The most interesting chapter is by Dorothy Canfield Fisher, who asks why we still support wars. She speaks of individuals and the hollow and frustrated lives they usually lead. She speaks of longing for a sense of vitality and surrender to an objective reality in which to drown all our heroically aware senses. She thinks William James should have written about this, with Dr. Watson as assistant. "Who else could adequately develop his own luminous idea about the need for nobly constructive, sufficiently violent substitutes for war?" But in this talk Mrs. Fisher really supports war. If all she wants are pleasurable stimulations "to certain important human nerve centers," the "illusion of heightened free bold living," and an escape from daily drabness—why try a substitute for war? It has served well. Her only reason is that the hang-over is unpleasant, even, as she says, as that after a drunk. But disregard for the consequences is a necessary element of the sort of escape she thinks we should have. She wants a man to leave "whatever it is that is unbearable in his life, ennui, emptiness, desolation, hopelessness, or perhaps some unendurably long-continued nerve-strain." Professors James and Watson will write the prescription. Let people follow it with the accuracy obtained in clean white laboratories. Ennui, emptiness, desolation, hopelessness, unendurably long-continued nerve-strain, will survive that just as they do a barrage in no-man's land.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

An Epicurean

Provence, by Ford Madox Ford. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.00.

IT IS, perhaps, characteristic that the worst—worst because slovenly and unexpressive—parts of Mr. Ford's book should be concerned with the Provence, and that by all odds the best should deal with London. The lovely region which he set out to be concerned with apparently supplied only two themes, both of lesser worth—a thesis to the effect that all civilization's worth-while constituents crept into circulation via the Provence, and a certain unsatisfactory to-do about eating. The thesis is good enough in its way, the sole trouble being that it is probably wrong and at any rate unconvincing; the to-do leads nowhere excepting apparently to befog the author's mind, which no sooner reverts to a *tournedos* or a *rouelle de veau Mistral* than it is befogged by the miasmas incident to digestion, and gets twisted in absurdities about the Albigenses and similar unimportant matters.

But on London and New York—as incidentally on all matters Anglo-Saxon—Mr. Ford is, I think, one of the best commentators now living. There are admirable pages on the British Museum, evoking both the human scene and the passing of time with skill: there are some corking good things about New York, including a kind of fugue on Mrs. Pat Campbell which is worth more than a year's reading of dramatic critics. It lets you see what an actress is like as well as anything one can think

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of. And, doubtless best of all, there is one whole section about the Fine Arts which few of us can really afford to miss. It is Epicurean, if you like, but as Mr. Ford himself once noted heaven is after all epicureanism sublimated, so that we may in spite of ourselves be preparing rightly for that desired above when we love the beauties of painting, music and good prose.

In its perfect moments this is a volume of very good prose, indeed. These are, one regrets to add, interlarded with comparative tripe. So the author would doubtless reply are most pages of very good prose.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

A Peasant

The Iron Mother, by Charles Braibant; translated by Vyvyan Holland. New York: Harper and .Brothers $2.50.

THE HARM and ruin that a dominating woman can bring upon her sensitive and shy son when the power of money suddenly falls into her hands, is the story told by Mr. Charles Braibant in his excellent first novel. The scene is laid in the small peasant village of Pargny, in the Champagne country of France.

Marline Bertaud, "the Iron Mother," comes of a long line of peasant farmers and well-to-do petty feudal officials, who have figured prominently in the historical and official documents of the town, for the past two or three hundred years. It is Marline's father, old Rémy Queutelot, the elected mayor of Pargny, who raises the family definitely from the peasant to the middle class. Marline brings her husband, an insignificant and unknown man, Prosper Betraud, from the Argonne district, to live with her in the house built by the Queutelots in the year 1694. There, a few years after their marriage, her husband dies, leaving her a young widow, with their young son, and their fortunes intact.

From this time on, Marline's peasant intelligence and vigor combined with her middle-class pride and respectability become a force and influence in the community. She is the most successful, hated and feared person among the peasants in Pargny. She lends them money, buys their lands and settles their disputes. Power becomes her aim in life.

All this success, instead of helping poor Aimé Bertaud, does precisely the opposite. His mother allows him no word in family affairs and to the end of his days, for she far outlives him, never increases his meager allowance. A sensitive, retiring boy, he grows up in perpetual fear of this mother. As a man, it debilitates him and renders him useless to cope practically with his own life and affairs.

There is a wealth of material in this book and a solidity of pattern which makes the picture that the author paints enduring. Mr. Braibant is in no hurry to tell his tale yet he tells us nothing superfluous. He gives us a deep sense of the Champagne country and its people. The book is so well translated that, except for the rare conversations, one hardly realizes that it is not in the orginal language.

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Briefer Mention

The Mission Bells of California, by Marie T. Walsh. San Francisco: Harr Wagner Publishing Company. $4.00.

HERE is a historical narrative charged with color and romance. After a fascinating opening chapter upon the evolution of bells, and a brief summary of California history, the author gives minute attention to the origin of the bells in the California missions, their founders and their foundries, the inscriptions upon them, and their placement. Their glory during the days of Franciscan California, their unhappy fate during Mexican domination and American occupation, until the present century brought intelligent restoration of what is left of the Franciscan missions, are all related in this truly delightful book. Miss Walsh's style has charm and life, her research is thorough, her findings are authentic, and the illustrations are numerous and well chosen. "The Mission Bells of California" should be in every Catholic library.

The Outcast, by Luigi Pirandello; translated by Leo Ongley. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $1.00.

SIGNOR PIRANDELLO'S first novel shows few signs of the unpractised hand: its form and scope must have been clear in his mind, for they seem to be realized with a neat and laudable economy. This novel does not display the concern with the problem of whether we are all figments of each other's imagination that characterizes his later work, but the problem is nevertheless present in embryonic form: Marta, one gathers, in time became the unfaithful wife her husband thought her to be, because thought and reality are in some way interactive, and thinking not only makes things good or bad but also makes things themselves. Though one may be right if he thinks he is, it is difficult for him to believe himself really right on these terms; and that perhaps accounts for the will-less quality of Signor Pirandello's characters: they move with the mysterious mechanical air of persons in a dream, so that the reader is more apt to grant the violence of their emotions than their emotions' value. However, Signor Pirandello is primarily telling a story in this book, which he does with such swiftness, efficiency and Latin understanding of the significant detail that it is well worth reading.

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